

Tuesday April 9 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50, Almaty L 2.00, Ankara FF 10, Astana K 2.50, Baku AZ 2.50, Beijing R 10.00, Bogota B 2.50, Brasilia B 2.50, Bucharest R 10.00, Cairo E 2.50, Caracas CC 1.00, Chennai I 2.50, Colombo S 2.50, Copenhagen D 10.00, Dallas TX 2.50, Dhaka B 2.50, Frankfurt F 10.00, Geneva S 2.50, Hong Kong H 2.50, Istanbul I 2.50, Jakarta J 2.50, Kuala Lumpur M 2.50, London L 1.00, Madrid M 2.50, Manila M 2.50, Moscow M 2.50, New York N 2.50, Osaka O 2.50, Paris P 2.50, Rome R 2.50, Seoul S 2.50, Singapore S 2.50, Taipei T 2.50, Tokyo T 2.50, Warsaw W 2.50, Wellington W 2.50, Perth P 2.50, Sydney S 2.50, Hong Kong H 2.50, London L 1.00, Moscow M 2.50, New York N 2.50, Paris P 2.50, Rome R 2.50, Seoul S 2.50, Singapore S 2.50, Taipei T 2.50, Tokyo T 2.50, Warsaw W 2.50, Wellington W 2.50, Perth P 2.50, Sydney S 2.50

The Guardian

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Martin Walker on a Hollywood rescue

The gay couple who saved MGM

The writer who walked through walls

Roddy Doyle — voice of battered women

Education

David Bellamy: Conservation on the curriculum

G2 with European weather

Linda Grant interview, G2 page 12

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War of words with Saudis forces BBC to shut down Arabic TV channel

Owen Bowcott
David Hirst

THE diplomatic furore over Saudi Arabian censorship of news about the London-based dissident Mohammed al-Mas'ari culminated last night in the BBC's Arabic Television channel being taken off air with the probable loss of 250 jobs.

The decision to pull the plugs on the £12 million a

year service — produced by the corporation and carried on a Saudi-owned satellite — comes less than a week after a BBC Panorama programme revived criticisms of human rights abuses in the kingdom.

In a brief statement, BBC Worldwide television confirmed it was seeking a "settlement of outstanding matters" with Orbit Communications and an "orderly wind-down of the service". No date has been set

for final transmission. Orbit is owned by the Mawarid Group whose chairman is the Saudi prince Khalid bin Abd al-Rahman. He is a cousin of King Fahd and married to the King's sister.

Prof al-Mas'ari last night welcomed the fallout. "It is the best thing," he said. "The BBC should not submit to Saudi censorship. There is no way you can get into the same bed with someone who has Aids and

get away safely. I believe the BBC filed a strong complaint about the censorship of services from Rome and the Saudis couldn't take it. The BBC World Service would do better to find a free channel not owned by the Saudis."

In January it emerged that reports on the BBC's Arabic Television channel about the plan to deport Prof Mas'ari to the Dominican Republic were being blocked out at Orbit's satel-

lite relay station in Rome. At that time the corporation said the gaps in transmission were being "urgently investigated" but it hoped the service could continue. It was not clear last night who initiated the end to the agreement.

The BBC's contract specified that it should maintain editorial control of the channel's output but signs had been growing of Saudi unease over the agreement and programme content.

The BBC said both sides had ultimately given notice "of intention to terminate" the agreement. The channel, launched in June 1994, initially broadcast for two hours a day but swiftly increased the service to eight hours. It offered subscribers news, business and factual programmes in Arabic.

Based in BBC studios in west London, it has been employing 250 journalists, producers and technicians. The channel's output was

beamed to the Orbit network in Rome, encrypted and broadcast throughout the Middle East and north Africa. Neither Orbit's nor Mawarid's offices in Rome or London could be contacted last night.

There is a remote hope that Arabic Television could be transferred to another satellite, Panamsat-4, on which the BBC has a transponder. The corporation may alternatively seek a fresh Arab partner.

A corporation spokesman said the Panorama programme on Saudi Arabia was broadcast on the channel on Thursday. Translation into Arabic normally takes up to 10 days. It was not blocked out by Orbit. The Foreign Office last night insisted there had been no contact with the Saudi authorities over the latest development.

Britain faces ERM threat

Ian Traynor in Bonn and Patrick Wintour

AN ALLIANCE of Germany, France and the European Commission is seeking to pressurise Britain into rejoining an overhauled Exchange Rate Mechanism in a move which will inflame Tory party divisions over Europe.

Refusal to put the pound into a new currency framework could result in trade sanctions or financial penalties being imposed on Britain, the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, will be warned at a meeting of European Union finance ministers later this week.

Although Mr Clarke will attempt to fend off moves by Britain's European partners to force the pace on closer currency ties, the ambush at Friday's meeting is certain to infuriate Tory Euro-sceptics.

Backed by the commission and Frankfurt-based European Monetary Institute (EMI) — the forerunner of a European central bank which would set EU-wide interest rates — the Franco-German alliance intends to punish Britain if sterling devalues outside a new system.

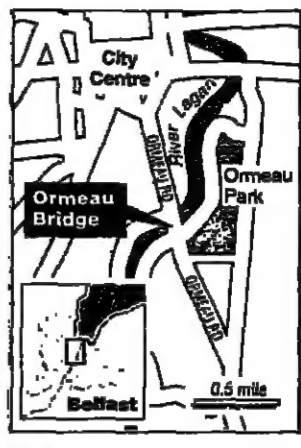
The sanctions could include discrimination on goods and services exported by Britain to the Continent and fines in the form of higher EU budget contributions.

Such a move could damage the single European market and represent a breach of the principle of free trade across national borders in the EU.

Euro-sceptics regard Britain's departure from the ERM on "Black Wednesday" in September 1992 as the turning point in the revival of the British economy. Interest rates have fallen dramatically since, while the weaker pound has given British exporters a competitive boost at the expense of European and world rivals.

Bill Cash, Conservative MP for Stafford, said: "Any attempt to bully Britain into another exchange rate mechanism by imposing sanctions must be vetoed. The Prime Minister would be expected to give instructions to Kenneth

Plastic bullets fired at demonstrators as violence marks start of marching season



Protestants confront riot police after being barred from marching into a mainly Catholic area of south Belfast yesterday

'The disgraceful attacks on the police are the work of people intent on violent confrontation and disorder. I utterly condemn them'

— Sir Patrick Mayhew

Ulster march ends in RUC clash

David Sharrock
Ireland Correspondent

VIOLENCE erupted on the opening day of the Protestant marching season in Northern Ireland when riot police fired plastic bullets at loyalist demonstrators wielding petrol bombs during a tense stand-off over the right to march through a largely Catholic district.

Five people were injured during yesterday's sporadic clashes, and several shops and businesses on Belfast's Ormeau Road were damaged as the RUC mounted a day-long blockade to prevent the

Protestant Apprentice Boys organisation from marching across the River Lagan into the Lower Ormeau.

Violence flared three times during the day-long stand-off, notably in the early evening when riot police fired a volley of plastic bullets into a crowd of 500 demonstrators.

Five Catholics were murdered in a bookmaker's shop on the Lower Ormeau by the Ulster Freedom Fighters four years ago. Since then the Lower Ormeau Concerned Community has orchestrated a campaign to prevent the parades taking place. The marchers say they had nothing to do with the murders

and are simply upholding a century-old tradition to march into the city centre down a public highway.

The local Ballynafeigh branch of the Apprentice Boys had been due to parade down the road in south Belfast — where Catholics have come to outnumber Protestants in the past two decades — at 7.30 in the morning before making their way to an annual rally in Portadown, Co Armagh.

But last week the RUC served notice that it would not permit the parade to go ahead, citing the threat of serious public disturbance as the reason. For much of the

day, barring two scuffles, the Apprentice Boys maintained a dignified vigil at the Ormeau Bridge, which was sealed before dawn by police armoured Land-Rovers.

In the afternoon the Rev Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, arrived at the bridge in an apparent attempt to negotiate a settlement. But he left without making any comment amid some barracking from the demonstrators.

At about 5pm it looked as if the demonstration was about to break up peacefully, but Apprentice Boys returning from their rally in Portadown turn to page 2, column 6

Revenue's lottery win taxes punters' patience

Owen Bowcott

AS IF crumpling up those daydreams every Saturday night were not enough, the National Lottery yesterday appeared to have devised a fresh formula for humiliating envious losers.

One winning ticket at the weekend, it emerged, was held by a Scottish syndicate of inland Revenue tax inspectors who took a substantial share of the £21 million jackpot on the first day of the financial year — and didn't have to pay tax. Awarding

free parking passes to a patrol of traffic wardens might have been as popular.

Each of the 19 workers at the Centre One office in East Kilbride, near Glasgow, will receive around £220,000 when Gamlot, the National Lottery organiser, reopens today after the Easter holiday.

One syndicate member said: "We are all stunned. The telephone lines have been buzzing since the draw. I don't think any of us will be considering retiring. I am sure it will be business as usual once the whole thing has sunk in."

A spokeswoman for the Inland Revenue said yesterday: "Lottery winnings, like all gambling, is tax-free. They won't have to declare it on their tax returns — though it might help explain to the local, friendly tax inspector why they are now living in a large mansion. Anyway, it gives us all hope for the future."

When the numbers — 1, 4, 6, 14, 17, 38 — were drawn, there were five winning tickets for the rollover cash accumulated over the previous two weeks. Their value was £4,245,315 apiece.

Austin

THAT'S ODD! LOOK AT MY TAX FORM!

Inside

Britain
Thefts from government departments — from computers — from horseboxes — have risen by 373 per cent in five years.

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World News

The United States is playing down the risk of conflict in Korea, fearing the South's domestic policies could inflame the crisis.

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Children were given among the best pay increases in the land last year with pocket money up by 17 per cent, a new survey shows.

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Manchester United increased their chances of a league and cup double with a 1-0 win over Coventry in the Premiership.

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Sketch

Seasonal gloom with a view



David Ward

THIS column's daughter is buying a flat, so the housing market must be picking up. The bad news is that this particular first-time buyer has not heard of the word deposit, so this column is broke again. Forgetting sympathy just send cheques. Grace Gilroy-Lowe has not promised a donation. She spent Easter in North Wales trying to sell a house (det. 4 beds, 2 baths, sea views, £35,000 inherited 18 months ago. "This is supposed to be the weekend for house viewing," she said. "No one showed up. I've read what they said about an upturn, but they said that a year ago." This column tried to cheer her up by describing his good fortune in selling just a year ago a terraced house in east London last year. But it sounded like gloating. We agreed the only option was prayer and Guardian readers. All offers will be forwarded. Mr X is equally sceptical about the market, despite having just sold his detached 200-year-old cottage in Fallsworth, near Oldham, Greater Manchester. The house (4 beds, 1 1/2 brick g's, walled gns, new kit) sold for under £50,000, having been originally offered at more than £70,000. "All this stuff about the market moving - it's just waffle from the Government," complained Mr X, who is emigrating to a better life in Australia with his family. "Nothing is moving here. The only reason people are staying in jobs is because they are frightened of death and being paid rubbish wages. The rich just seem to get richer." Mr X sold his house privately, having disposed of an estate agent he described as useless. Perhaps he should have consulted the new firm of Jordan Fishwick which opened its first office in Wilmslow, Cheshire, a year ago. Partner David Staggs

Refugees have taken over the US embassy compound, writes Phillip van Niekerk in Monrovia

Liberia plunges into chaos

A REFUGEE camp has risen mushroom-like in the US embassy compound at Mamba Point, at the southern tip of Monrovia. From the four corners of the Liberian capital people have walked here with only what they can carry on their heads. Up to 20,000 are crammed into every inch of space, even extending on to the tennis courts. Their stories offer the first insight into the human devastation left by heavy fighting that has raged for three days in the city and its suburbs. A young woman says that the Krahn people, loyal to the dissident General Roosevelt Johnson, came to her neighbourhood, killed at least 25 people and burnt houses. In the middle of her story, a crackle of AK-47 fire from outside the compound sends 20,000 people ducking and diving in unison. There is no safe haven left in Monrovia. No one cares which side the fighters are on. They all share roughly the same profile. They are under 25, doped up, well armed and their writ is the only one the city now knows. Just outside the compound, a body lies in the street. The back of his head is missing, indicating an execution-style killing. Black smoke hangs over the city, coming from the Barclay Training Centre Bar-

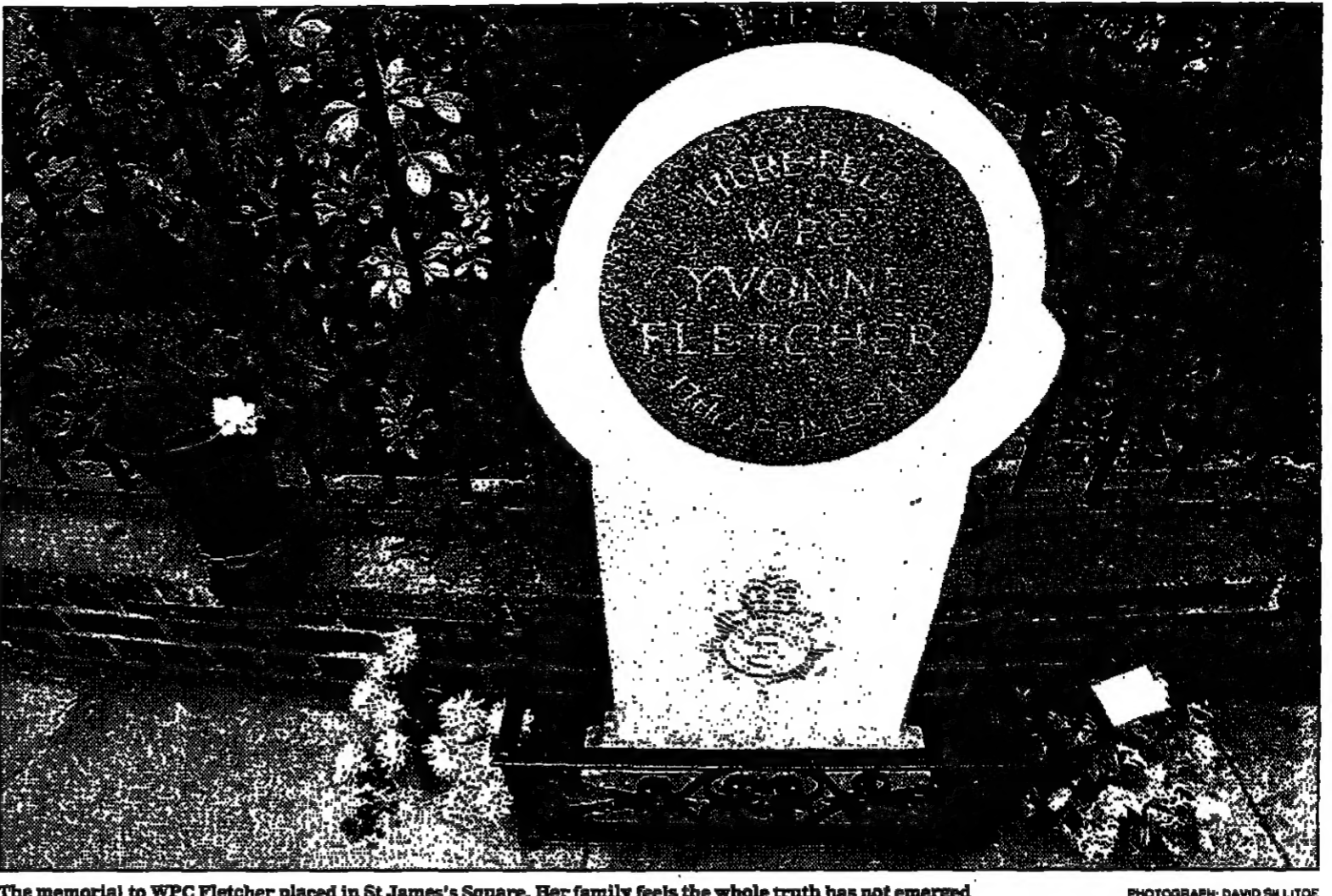
racks where rival factions are locked in battle. A US military team from Europe was scheduled to arrive in Monrovia today in order to determine whether some 400 Americans should be evacuated along with other foreign nationals. Diplomats said many foreigners were trapped in their homes. Reports last night said 38 foreign nationals, thought to be Lebanese, had been taken hostage by Krahn forces. The UN said it had yet to decide whether to evacuate its 233 personnel. A spokesman, Ahmad Fawzi, said most of the UN's 90 military observers had taken refuge in the US compound. The radio station of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front calls on people from the Bassa community to leave the area of the barracks to enable the "security forces" - code for its own militia - to conduct "mopping up" operations. The term "mopping up" is wishful thinking. In the compound, Alfred Sherrif has just escaped from the barracks. He confirms that it is still held by the Krahn faction, loyal to Gen Johnson, whose attempted arrest on murder charges was the pretext for the mayhem. Mr Sherrif said he saw more than 20 peacekeepers of the West African Peacekeeping Force, Ecomog, held captive there. Three tanks had also been captured. The Ecomog troops have stood back for three days, allowing the city to be sacked. But yesterday they moved in behind Mr Taylor's forces to root out the dissidents. An Alpha jet fighter, the first plane seen in skies for days, offered a sign that Ecomog and the Taylor faction had recaptured the airport. A six-member council of state has been running the country since last August. But since the battle began, the warlords, Mr Taylor and Alhaji GV Kromah, have spoken on behalf of the government. The action against Gen Johnson thus indicated an effective coup d'etat by

the Taylor-Kromah alliance. At the Mamba Point Hotel, a small group of Europeans gazes nervously out to sea. Outside can be heard the rattle of small arms fire and occasional artillery. No one eats near the windows. If they go they will leave behind a human disaster. Already, the refugees at the compound are hungry. The price of rice rose five times in a day. Mr Taylor's radio station stays on, pop music interrupted by snippets of propaganda. "No one can be allowed to violate the law and go unpunished," says an announcer, untroubled by the irony that this has been a city of total lawlessness for three days.



Yvonne Fletcher: shot dead during demonstration

Documentary says second gunman could have been behind killing in 1984 which hardened British attitude to Gaddafi



The memorial to WPC Fletcher placed in St James's Square. Her family feels the whole truth has not emerged

'US involved' in death of WPC at Libyan embassy

Duncan Campbell and Richard Norton-Taylor
YVONNE Fletcher, the policewoman shot dead during a demonstration outside the Libyan Embassy more than 10 years ago, could have been killed by a member of the American intelligence services to enlist British support against Libya, according to a documentary to be shown tomorrow. The programme claims that a second gunman could have been involved in the killing, and suggests many key facts in the case have been covered up. WPC Fletcher was on duty outside the Libyan Embassy in St James's Square, central London, in

April 1984 when shots were fired at anti-Gaddafi demonstrators. At the time it was believed that all the shots had been fired from the first floor of the Embassy building. No one was charged with the murder. The 22 Embassy officials were allowed to leave the building 10 days after the shooting. Her mother, Queenie Fletcher, said on the tenth anniversary of her daughter's death: "I think the Government probably knew more about that demonstration than anyone admits. They knew that there was something different about it but the message wasn't passed on. It should have been policed differently and constables like Yvonne should not have been there." A Dispatches documentary to be shown on Channel 4 tomorrow suggests that Yvonne Fletcher's death could have been a cynical murder in order to bring the British into line as part of the United States' campaign against Libya. When the US bombed Tripoli in an unsuccessful attempt to kill Gaddafi in April 1986, it was vital that they had the use of British airbases to launch their attacks. The programme casts doubt on the original find-

ing that WPC Fletcher must have come from a first floor window of the embassy. It suggests, with the backing of Hugh Thomas - a controversial former army surgeon - that the trajectory of the bullet that killed her indicates that she was shot from a much greater height. It is also claimed that the security services were aware of the fact that Colonel Gaddafi had told those in the embassy that they could respond to the protest demonstration by Libya with dissidents by opening fire on them. It was clear, it is suggested, that on the day WPC Fletcher was killed there was intelligence that a shooting should take place. The programme argues that the fatal shot could have come from a handgun fired from the sixth floor of another building in the square which had recently been used by intelligence officers. American security analysts say that the shooting drastically altered the British attitude to Gaddafi which, until then, had been much more relaxed than that within the Reagan administration. Conservative MP Teddy

Taylor, who has taken an interest in the case for a number of years, says in the programme that attempts to get the truth of what exactly happened that day have been rebuffed. "What we get back all the time is waffle," he says. The programme says a post-mortem report on Ms Fletcher was changed after the inquest and a Cabinet Office report on the incident was never published.

Review

Small idea on a small stage

Adam Sweeting

Gary Numan
Apollo, Hammermith

LIKE Cliff Richard, Gary Numan's real surname is Webb. Perhaps the similarities don't end there. Despite his superficial trappings of electronic funk, glam and a performing persona which makes John Redwood seem amusing and spontaneous, Numan is a determined self-made entrepreneur, who has built himself a dependably loyal following despite ceaseless rickshaws from critics. Indeed, like Sir Cliff, he has plugged away so doggedly that the critics have given up. It would be tempting to say something like "Numan has come a long way since he formed Tubeway Army in 1977," but musically, at least, it would be transparently untrue. His two best known songs, Cars and Are 'Friends' Electric?, will always be his two best known songs. Cars is enjoying its umpteenth lease of life thanks to a larger commercial. Numan, who famously voiced his support for Margaret Thatcher in 1983, was quick to grasp the principle that one idea, however small, could conquer the world if it was repackaged and exported aggressively enough. If Numan's appeal was unfathomable then, it is utterly baffling now. Gary apologised for having to squeeze his act on to the little bit of the stage not occupied by the scenery for an ongoing production of Joseph, but even if the stage had been twice the size it is difficult to imagine its being twice as good. Drums and key-

NUT leader crushed in 'more democracy' fight

John Carvel
Education Editor

DOUG McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, yesterday went down to a crushing defeat in his attempt to break the power of leftwingers by introducing new procedures to submit all conference decisions to a postal ballot of the full membership. As delegates pressed on to approve strike action when ever teachers were "victimized" by critical reports from the school inspectorate, he saw the failure to give authority back to grassroots members was a sad day for the 125-year-old union. Mr McAvoy had viewed yesterday's votes as the key test in his battle to prevent the NUT continuing as an over-aggressive but toothless tiger, passing resolutions for militant action at conferences each Easter which were rarely carried out by members in the schools. He wanted the union to become the first in the TUC to introduce ballots before any conference decision could take effect. But the plan was defeated by 102,278 votes to 74,044, delegates deciding rule by plebiscite from union headquarters would not encourage democratic participation at branch level.

"I cannot explain why anyone would vote against (the ballot proposal) unless they are not confident the decisions they take here are supported by those they claim to represent," Mr McAvoy said. "That could be the only logical reason for members opposing putting to a ballot of the membership decisions taken in their name." He promised to continue the fight to increase democracy in the union. When ever teachers were being asked to take any form of action, it was necessary for them to be balloted. "We cannot extend the boycott of testing without going to the members, nor can we engage in a policy of not co-operating with school inspectors." The conference went on to approve an amendment supporting a ballot for industrial action in any school where a teacher is victimised as a result of an inspection by the Office for Standards in Education. Delegates were concerned about plans by Chris Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools, to grade teachers on a scale of one to seven on the evidence of as few as two inspected lessons, advising heads to take action against poor performers. They considered this an unfair approach to pursuing Mr Woodhead's aim of rooting out 15,000 "incompetent" teachers. Conference reports, page 5; Leader comment, page 8

Plastic bullets fired as Protestants and RUC clash

continued from page 1
30 miles away began swelling the numbers. Some of those present seemed determined to stage a repeat of last July's three-day stand-off between police and Orangemen in Foyardown, in what became known as the Siege of Dunmore, after an Orange parade was banned from going down a Catholic road. More plastic bullets were fired when demonstrators began smashing their way into a tyre depot, at which point the police pushed them some 200 yards further up the Ormeau Road. Side streets were sealed off. Defending the officers' action, Ronnie Flanagan, the deputy chief constable, said outside elements were to blame for the trouble. "Many of them were quite obviously the worse for drink," he said. Sir Patrick Maynew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, said: "The disgraceful attacks on the police are the work of people intent on violent confrontation and disorder." "I utterly condemn them as well everyone in Northern Ireland who believes in peaceful and democratic methods." As the evening wore on more Protestant bands arrived, marching up and down the road and playing a medley of loyalist songs. But later in the evening calm had been restored and many of the protesters began to drift away.

Burger and bazooka coupon offer misfires in Baltimore

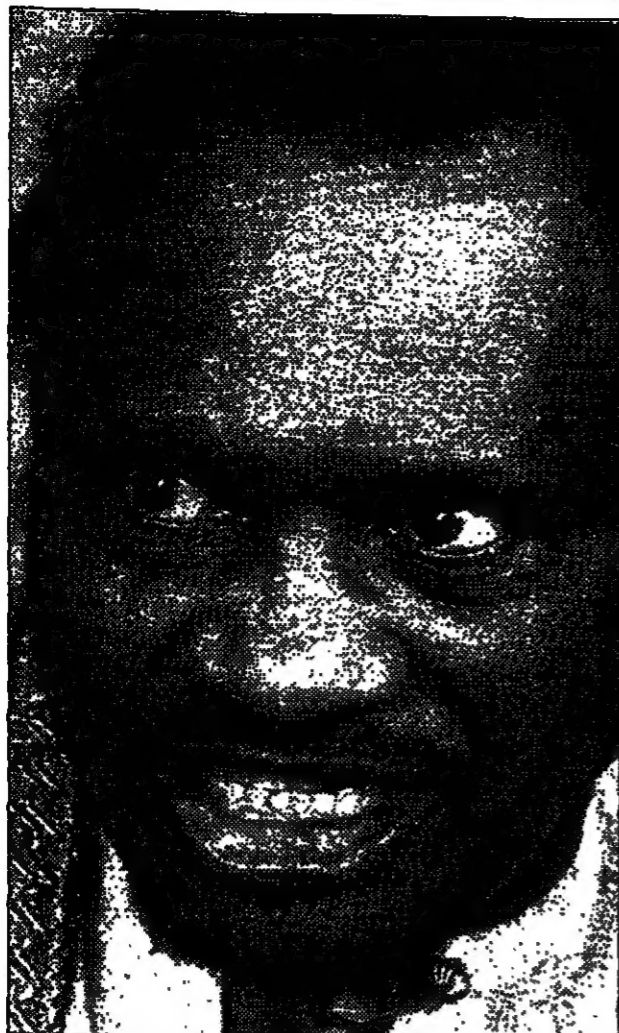
A BURGER King restaurant in Baltimore offered a whopper of a deal - buy food and get a discount on ammunition or a gun. A coupon printed on the back of meal receipts said: "Good for one free box of ammo with gun purchase or 10 per cent off." But within an hour of learning about the coupon, Burger King headquarters in Miami told the operator to withdraw

the offer. That prompted the owner of the sports shop they were running the offer with, Tim Watson, to threaten a lawsuit. He spent \$14,000 to promote his store at the restaurant and on cable TV. "I don't sell to low-lives or criminals," he said. There were 320 murders and 1,200 shootings in Baltimore last year alone. Baltimore Sun

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صحنات من الاعمال



Paul Robeson as Othello at Stratford in 1959



Anthony Hopkins in a 1981 BBC TV version of the play

Giles Foden on the latest academic work to cast doubt on the authorship of English literature's most famous plays



Donald Sinden and Suzanne Bertish in the RSC's Othello at the Aldwych Theatre in the West End in 1980

Shakespeare scribe 'rewrote Othello'

Bard's tragedy could have become comedy of printing errors — but some say it is much ado about nothing

ORSON Welles, Paul Robeson, Laurence Olivier, Donald Sinden, Anthony Hopkins — they may have got it all wrong. They could all have been speaking the wrong lines in the part of Othello, as indeed Lawrence Fishburne might be playing the Moor to Kenneth Branagh's Iago in the current cinema version of the drama.

For much of Othello was rewritten by the man who copied it out for the printers, according to a book launched at the World Shakespeare Congress in Los Angeles yesterday.

In *The Texts of Othello and Shakespearean Revision*, published this week, Professor Ernst Honigsmann, a noted Shakespearean scholar, claims that the scribe, or scribes, Ralph Crane, substantially altered Shakespeare's original, including the famous speech "It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul", spoken by Othello as he approaches Desdemona's bed with murderous intent.

"The argument of my book is that a very large number of words in the play as usually printed are more likely to come from the pen of Ralph Crane than from the pen of Shakespeare," says the author.

As a performer who happened to write plays, Shakespeare took little trouble about the transformation of his work from near illegible manuscript to printable form (although he was careful about his poems).

The plays were published in two versions, known as quarto and folio. A quarto is usually a single play published on its own, a folio is a collection of plays (of 36 or thereabouts in Shakespeare's case); the words folio and quarto refer to the folding of the sheet.

Honigsmann's case depends on the acceptance of Crane as the scribe who copied out the 1623 folio version of the play, which has long been adopted by editors as fundamentally Shakespearean, in preference to the 1622 quarto edition, which suffered from the shaky finances and questionable procedures of the printer Thomas Walkley, or from "memorial pervasions" as Professor Honigsmann puts it.

There are hundreds of different words in the two versions. The questions are: which differences are Shakespeare's own revisions, which are those of his collaborators, and which are textual corruptions — and does it matter anyway?

Russell Jackson, text adviser to the Lawrence Fishburne Othello, and currently working with Kenneth Branagh on his forthcoming film of Hamlet, doesn't think it does.

"I don't think it affects the people who perform or interpret the plays unless they feel the need to attribute them to their entirety to one presiding genius," he said from the Shepperton set of Hamlet.

"They're still vital theatrical texts whether or not they come from the pen of one man," says John Kerrigan, editor of Shakespeare's sonnets for Penguin, who has given a cautious welcome to Honigsmann's proposals.

"Honigsmann is reminding us that Shakespeare's texts come down to us through various hands. Reinstating the Old Adam of corruption, he remains a shadowy figure. A lawyer's scrivener, he worked for Shakespeare's King's Men theatre company between 1619 and 1623, mainly on comedies — although he did write a poem that survives.



Laurence Fishburne playing the lead in the current film version of the play

As for Ralph Crane, he remains a shadowy figure. A lawyer's scrivener, he worked for Shakespeare's King's Men theatre company between 1619 and 1623, mainly on comedies — although he did write a poem that survives.

Honigsmann takes his place in a long line of disputants about Shakespearean authorship. The lawyer and philosopher Francis Bacon has been enlisted as disseminating his occult philosophy through the work of "Shakespeare".

Edward de Vere, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford, has been proposed as the author of Hamlet (Preston was a supporter of this claim).

There have also been suggestions that rival playwright Christopher Marlowe was not killed in a drunken brawl, or an Elizabethan secret service execution, but went on to write secretly as "Shakespeare". Others believe that the plays are the work of a group including leading figures of the day, such as Walter Raleigh.

EAJ Honigsmann, *The Texts of Othello and Shakespearean Revision* (Routledge, £35)

True or false?

Variations between the two earliest printed versions of Othello, the Quarto of 1622 and the Folio of 1623.

Act 1 Scene 3

Quarto
Othello: Your voyces Lords: beseech you let her will, Have a free way, I therefore beg it not To please the palate of my appetite.

Folio
Othello: Let her have your voice. Vouch with me Heaven, I there fore beg it not, To please the palate of my Appetite.

Act 1 Scene 3

Quarto
Either for stay or going, the affaires cry last, And speede must answer, you must hence to night, Dead: To night my Lord? Du: This night.

Folio
Oth: With all my heart. Folio
Either for her stay, or going: th'Affaire cries last: And speede must answer it. Sen: You please usay to night Oth: With all my heart.

Mr. Howes, who works for the British charity Mines Advisory Group, was one of a number of mainly British soldiers and his back pack of 300 Cambodians to clear the millions of mines left after 25 years of conflict. He moved to Cambodia in November.

The gang took him hostage with more than a dozen Cambodian assistants. After he refused to return to Siem Reap and his back pack of 300 Cambodians for the release of his team, his men were released and he and Mr Hourth were marched off.

According to General Khan Savouen, the regional army commander, three villagers sent as intermediaries have also been kidnapped.

In 1993 the Khmer Rouge seized and then released a British de-miner working for the Halo Trust. A year later seven Westerners, including three Britons, were seized and all but one, an American woman aid worker, killed.

CBI tries to nail 'insecurity myth'

Business chiefs hope inquiry will counter fears over job flexibility

Richard Thomas
Economics Correspondent

REPRESENTATIVES of Britain's largest businesses have launched a big inquiry to counter charges that firms are exploiting part-time and contract staff and to head off pressure for enhanced worker rights from a Labour government.

Business leaders fear a Blair administration will use growing job insecurity to justify tighter labour market regulation.

Members of the Confederation of British Industry's employment policy committee have instructed staff to investigate the problem, the Guardian has learned. Insiders expect the probe to show that job insecurity is a problem of perception rather than reality.

One top policy adviser at the CBI said: "Sometimes perception overtakes reality. That could be well the case here."

Work on the inquiry, expected to draw on specially commissioned opinion polls, has just started and the final draft will form the basis for discussion at the CBI's annual meeting in November.

John Criddle, the CBI's human resources policy director, said: "Our members were worried that growing concerns about job insecurity would be harmful to the credibility of flexible employment: part-time work and so on."

change and we would be a casualty." But Labour seized on the move as evidence the CBI was moving on to its agenda.

Michael Meacher, shadow employment secretary, said that whatever the motive for the research, it represented a significant change of tack.

"I very much welcome the CBI's concern over job insecurity. This shows the CBI beginning to act as social partners in a way that will help an incoming Labour government to tackle this endemic problem."

He admitted differences over policy were likely to remain. "But the fact they are even looking at it indicates a more positive approach."

Some CBI officials are concerned that the organisation has been too hostile to Labour on issues such as the minimum wage and the European social chapter, and fear the research could be used to undermine one of the Opposition's main election themes.

Work may not shake up for sale, page 11

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'My eye can never perceive lines or details, and I never think of counting the hairs on a pedestrian's beard or the buttons on his coat. Such trifles never distract my attention.'
Goya at the Prado

Computer thieves hit Whitehall

David Hencke
Westminster Correspondent

THEFTS from government departments — particularly computer equipment — has soared by 75 per cent over the last five years, according to figures released by ministers.

The scale of the increase — from just over £400,000 in 1981 to £1,973,042 last year — has led some departments to link the spate of thieving to organised gangs, using contractors' passes to gain access.

Among departments targeted are the Serious Fraud Office, SAFE, the security agency, the Cabinet Office, the Treasury and the Crown Prosecution Service.

The increase, revealed in a series of parliamentary answers to Ian McCartney, Labour's employment spokesman, coincides with large purchases of computer equipment.

One of the largest increases — 831.4 per cent from £32,291 to £247,041 at the Department of Employment — has been linked to computer thefts from buildings in Westminster and Holborn in central London by people using contractors' passes, taking advantage of privatisation.

The Department of Health, which records a 2,068 per cent increase from £10,888 a year to £223,020, blames the rise on "an increasing frequency of break-ins by professional criminals in search of computers and their components".

The thefts are understated because not all are recorded. The Department of Environment keeps no central records while the Ministry of Defence does not record anything stolen worth less than £100,000.

The ministry recently disclosed that it had lost many valuable prints and paintings from buildings, including the boardroom of the Admiralty Arch.

Its only recorded thefts are some three-inch Royal Navy rockets worth £104,000 and a thermal imager worth £118,000. The thermal imager disappeared off the back of a lorry during a transfer between bases while the rockets disappeared while being unloaded at a Scottish port.

The rockets fire anti radar fillings rather than weapons. Among the more exotic thefts are 23 heat lamps and a horsebox from the Home Office; an uninterruptible power supply unit from the Treasury and a despatch van from the Scottish Office.

Mr McCartney said: "It is appalling that ministerial incompetence is allowing millions of pounds worth of government equipment to disappear. Some small losses may be expected in any organisation, but when £50,000 worth of chairs, £100,000 worth of rockets and even a horsebox vanish there is serious cause for concern."

"Only one government department said it was looking at ways of improving security. If ministers do not take action to stop this flood of property flowing out of the back door of their departments, they will be regarded as partners in crime."

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The Roman garden, featuring a fountain based on one excavated at Pompeii, is one of a series of 'green rooms' in the 55 acre grounds of Dyffryn House

Stately home a cash victim of council reorganisation

New unitary authority has closed Dyffryn House and only lottery funding can save its famous gardens, Maeve Kennedy reports

A STATELY home near Cardiff has closed its doors and its famous gardens are under threat, after becoming one of the first victims in the heritage area of local government reorganisation.

The house and its gardens were jointly administered by Mid and South Glamorgan county councils, which ceased to exist on March 31. The new council will not know until June if its application for lottery money has succeeded.

The house was built in 1890 for the coal and shipping millionaire John Cory, and the 55 acre gardens were designed 10 years later by the landscape architect Thomas Mawson, working with Cory's son Reginald.

and a canal filled with water lilies. They are a big attraction and host numerous outdoor events, including concerts and plays.

Leeds mugging death sparks 'spy' cameras dispute

Councillors concerned as minister calls for closed circuit TV in wake of fatal inner city attack

Father died helping daughter in pub brawl

Ashdown attacks 'Tory tax con'

Patrick Wintour on Government's hopes to keep Labour to a 3,000-5,000 majority in Thursday's Staffordshire by-election

MARTIN Wainwright on views of CCTV

A MAN of 60 died of a heart attack as he tried to rescue his daughter from a brawl in Oxford street yesterday.

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PLANS to install a closed circuit TV system in the Leeds inner city area of Chapeltown — where war veteran Stefan Popovich died of a heart attack after being dragged from his car — have been given fresh impetus by the attack.

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Tories hope to see tide turning in damage limitation exercise

Patrick Wintour on Government's hopes to keep Labour to a 3,000-5,000 majority in Thursday's Staffordshire by-election

Ashdown attacks 'Tory tax con'

Patrick Wintour on Lib Dem drive for national victory

Ashdown attacks 'Tory tax con'

THE Conservative Party is hoping to restrict the size of an expected Labour victory in Thursday's Staffordshire South-East by-election to a majority of between 3,000 to 5,000 and then claim it as the first clear sign that the anti-Government tide is receding.

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Drugs 'planted' on lorry drivers

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

TWO British lorry drivers who claim they were duped by heroin dealers will appear in court in Bulgaria today to appeal against their conviction for drug smuggling.

Last May John Mills, aged 41, from north London, was hired by an Essex haulage company to take Ford vehicle parts to Turkey.

While they were in Turkey, Mills was asked to make a detour and pick up an order in Bulgaria. In early June, the two men were arrested in Bulgaria after 20kgs of heroin, worth more than £600,000, had been found in an outside compartment of their lorry.

They were charged with heroin smuggling, and a trial set for October. They were detained in prison in Sofia during which time Hobbs, who suffers from depression, became ill through dehydration.

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Law Society loses PR chief as dispute rumbles on

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

THE dispute between senior officials at the Law Society and its president, Martin Mears, has claimed another casualty, with the announcement today that Sue Stapely, head of public relations, is to depart.

She will become a director of the communications consultancy Fishburn Hedges. Her decision to leave comes less than a month after Andrew Lockley, director of corporate and regional affairs, announced his departure.

Mr Mears, the anti-establishment outsider elected last summer, has made no secret of his belief that Ms Stapely and Mr Lockley, along with some other senior staff, were against him. He had said that he could not work with either.

Ashdown attacks 'Tory tax con'

Patrick Wintour on Lib Dem drive for national victory

THE LIBERAL Democrat leader, Paddy Ashdown, yesterday urged his party's local election candidates to turn May 2 into a springboard for the general election by consolidating their place as the second party of local government.

In a letter trailing the key themes of his party's campaign, Mr Ashdown urged Lib Dem councillors and candidates to convince voters that they were paying for income tax cuts with council tax rises and cuts in council budgets.

"It is not easy trying to square the circle of this annual Conservative con trick," he wrote.

Patrick Wintour on Lib Dem drive for national victory

The Conservatives are defending about 1,000 seats. If predictions that they will lose 500 seats prove correct, their tally will hit a record low.

However, Central Office hopes that better results in by-elections since last autumn will be a trend confirmed in next month's vote.

The Tories can hardly do worse than last year, when their national share fell to 25 per cent and set the current record low. They lost more than 2,000 seats mainly to Labour, which gained 1,848 seats, more than three times its previous record. The Lib Dems gained 500 seats.

It was the first time since 1950 that the Lib Dems had made fewer net gains than Labour, but Mr Ashdown's party still ended up with 5,043 councillors to the Tories' 4,885. It controlled 55 councils, against the Tories' 51.

Patrick Wintour on Government's hopes to keep Labour to a 3,000-5,000 majority in Thursday's Staffordshire by-election

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News in brief

Missing schoolgirl found safe

A MISSING schoolgirl, Deo Adebayo, was found safe yesterday at a railway station less than a mile from her home. The station manager at Dartford, Kent, alerted police when he recognised the 15-year-old. Police said she was returning home voluntarily. Detective Sergeant Driscoll at Dartford police station said: "We do not yet have any idea why she ran away and it is too early to say where she has been."

Slimming pills may be banned

MINISTERS are considering banning some slimming pills, the Department of Health said yesterday after reports of a confidential document linking the amphetamine-based drugs with 15 deaths. A Department of Health spokesman refused to comment on the leaked report which also claims hundreds of patients have suffered serious mental and physical side-effects. But she said: "Following a consultation period and hearings by the Medicines Commission, ministers are considering the question of whether slimming pills need to be banned. The commission's advice is now with ministers and we are expecting a decision in the near future."

Toxic cloud closes M1

THE M1 motorway was closed for more than two hours and people were advised to stay indoors yesterday after a toxic yellow cloud of nitric acid gas escaped from an industrial plant. Firefighters dealt with the incident, described by police as an "accidental venting" of gas, at Global Environmental Services in the Blackburn Meadows area of Sheffield. The motorway was closed at junction 24, with a diversion set up, and railway services were halted for a time as emergency services waited for the gas cloud, which was at a high level, to disperse. "We were considerably helped by the fact that it was a bank holiday and traffic was very light. It would have been very difficult on a normal Monday morning," said a police spokesman.

Alien beach 'challenge'

THE North of England's toughest tourist challenge is looking for a single-minded promoter. Limitless imagination heads the list of qualities demanded for the holder of the new post, who will start work on a beach so black and ominous that it was used for the opening sequences of the film Alien. "It's a huge challenge," said Michael Jones of Durham county council, which is hiring the manager for a £10 million Millennium Commission project to clean up the county's shoreline. "Our hope is that, in time, people will be coming to spend holidays again on the coast." The commission's 'Turning the Tide' project aims to transform the 12-mile stretch by 2001, when the whole shoreline is planned to become a national nature reserve. — Martin Wainwright

Fish and chips world record

MORE THAN 12,000 Australians queued at Harry Ramsden's fish restaurant in Melbourne to break the world record for fish and chips served in a day, the company said yesterday. Customers queued for half a mile to sample what Egon Ronay calls Britain's "most distinctive contribution to world cuisine". The first portions were sold at 7.45am on Good Friday and customers went on to work their way through nearly two tons of haddock specially imported from the UK, a company spokesman said. The Australians beat the record of 11,900 portions set in 1992 by Harry Ramsden's Glasgow chippie, according to the Guinness Book of Records.

Bank holiday taken too far

A bank was yesterday reviewing security arrangements after staff left one of its branches unlocked. A woman customer walked into Barclays in Muswell Hill, North London, at 10.50am on Good Friday to find it deserted. To add to the bank's embarrassment, the alarm system linking the building to police was not switched on. The customer dialled 999. Police arrived to find everything intact, Barclays said. "There are rigorous procedures laid down for closing banks at the end of each day and we will be looking at them."

Ill-health retirements at record Education used as 'political football' Doubts on Labour plans

Teachers 'papering cracks'

Donald MacLeod and John Carvel

TEACHERS are suffering stress as they paper over the cracks in education caused by constant change, underfunding and politicians' attempts to "outdo each other", a teachers' leader said yesterday. Peter Cole, president of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, was applauded for attacks on both Labour and Conservative hypocrisy over schools in his speech to the union's annual conference in Glasgow. "A recent disturbing development is the way in which the Labour Party has been drawn into the game and now appears to out-Tory the Tories. Teachers feel politicians are looking to make careers out of bringing chaos to education."

They say have produced record levels of ill-health retirements. Since the mid-1980s, when the Conservatives "made education a political football", schools had faced a series of changes to the curriculum, testing and funding, said Mr Cole. These had not improved children's education. "Teachers have secured what successes there have been in spite of the imposed educational instability, constant change and turmoil about them," he said. "A recent disturbing development is the way in which the Labour Party has been drawn into the game and now appears to out-Tory the Tories. Teachers feel politicians are looking to make careers out of bringing chaos to education."

men's education changes, ill-health retirements had been running at about 1,500 a year. Last year they had quadrupled to more than 6,000. "There has been a cost to the teaching profession, trying to provide pupils with the best education possible in the face of enormous odds which the educational policies of the last decade or so have persistently lengthened," Mr Cole said. He was applauded when he attacked the decision by Harriet Harman, Labour's health spokeswoman, to send her son to a grant-maintained grammar school, as hypocritical. Delegates to the NUT's conference in Cardiff reflected Mr Cole's comments. Jackie Hitchcock, who does supply teaching in Faversham, Kent, said she found it hard to tell the party positions apart. "There is very little positive coming from any of them. I want more funding to put more teachers in the classroom, more good teachers with more resources. I have done supply teaching in classes where each book had to be shared between three pupils," she said.

Where the parties stand



Conservative
Selection Wants a more selective system. A while paper in June will say schools should control their own admissions policy, possibly choosing up to 100 per cent of pupils by academic ability.



Labour
Selection Says no to selection by examination or interview. Fate of remaining 160 grammar schools to be decided by ballots of parents in their catchment areas.



Lib-Dem
Selection Opposes more selection. Local education authorities should be left to decide what happens to the remaining grammar schools.

Opting Out Treading carefully because Tony Blair and Harriet Harman have sons at GM schools. Would let them become "foundation schools" with admissions policy agreed with local authorities.

Opting Out Opposes GM status. All opted out schools to be brought back under light-touch local authority control, getting the same treatment as other state schools.

Opting Out Will consider abolishing the assisted places scheme. Proposals to extend independent schools' charitable status to all schools to be debated at autumn conference.

Resources Claims to have boosted school budgets by 4.7 per cent this year, but opposition parties say this can only be done by cutting other public services. Deficit class sizes are a problem.

Resources Unspecific on spending total, but promises to cut class sizes for under-7s to a maximum of 30, using £110 million saved from abolishing the assisted places scheme.

Resources Promises a £2 billion increase in education spending, paid for if necessary by a 1p increase in the rate of income tax. Plus £500 million extra for capital spending.

Private schools Pledges to double the assisted places places, which pays for bright children from poor homes to attend fee-paying schools, widening eligibility to include pupils as young as 5.

Private schools Will consider abolishing the assisted places scheme and discuss with independent schools how their facilities could be opened up to the community. No proposals for changing their tax privileges.

Private schools Will consider abolishing the assisted places scheme. Proposals to extend independent schools' charitable status to all schools to be debated at autumn conference.

Pre-school Legislation provides a £1,000 nursery voucher for all 4-year-olds from April 1996, to be funded in local authority, private or voluntary nurseries.

Pre-school Says vouchers will not help in areas lacking nursery places. Promises free entitlement to nursery education for all 4-year-olds, to be extended later to 3-year-olds.

Pre-school Opposes vouchers. Promise to spend £900 million a year to expand nursery education for all 3- and 4-year-olds.



NASWT conference delegates heard that the odds against good education were lengthening. PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF MORGAN

Arson attack at primary school in state of siege

John Carvel Education Editor

A HEAD teacher told last night how her primary school was put in a state of siege for six weeks, culminating in an arson attack on Easter Sunday. Judith Elderkin, aged 52, had told the National Union of Teachers conference in Cardiff that she had been stoned and taunted after com-

ing forward as a witness to the theft of a radio from a colleague's car at Marlborough Road primary school in Salford, Greater Manchester. Her case was highlighted at the conference when Doug McAvoy, the general secretary, said it showed the need for stronger measures to protect schools and teachers after the murder of Philip Lawrence, the west London head teacher, and the massacre in Dunblane.

Mrs Elderkin said that on Sunday evening a guard was posted at the school. After he went back into the school building, lighted material was put in through the windows. The roof of the nursery and infant school had been damaged and the premises were flooded with the water which burst out the fire. About 20 pupils would need emergency accommodation when the new term starts next week. "I don't think my experi-

ence is unique. Similar incidents go unreported and this one would have been if it had not been for the arson attack," she said. Mrs Elderkin said security was not a problem at her inner city school which has 480 pupils in two buildings until she and two other members of staff came forward as witnesses to the car vandalism. "Having identified the culprit we were put under some

pressure. On the following weekend 30 high-level windows were kicked in, showering glass into the school." Every box of books in the infants' department was sprayed in glass and the staff feared further reprisals. Mrs Elderkin said the local education authority sent security guards at a cost of £1,800 a week and she was confident when she left for the conference that her school was well guarded.

The school had no perimeter fence, eight gates to the site and 15 entry and exit doors. "Teachers are working under stress because of known hostility towards them. It is unreasonable for teachers not to have the maximum protection." Mr McAvoy said the union was not suggesting that the people who committed the arson attack were those involved in the earlier episodes of stoning or taunting.

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New cancer test 'could save 1,000 lives a year'

Chris Millill Medical Correspondent

ADDING a new test for a virus to the existing cervical screening programme could save 1,000 lives a year, scientists said yesterday. Researchers from the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and co-ordinators of the national cervical screening programme who have reviewed the scheme say it prevents nearly half potential cases of the cancer.

The doctors, who used figures for 1992 taken from 24 health authorities and health boards, found that a feasible routine to assess the amount of cancer prevented by screening — and to identify areas where it could be improved. Peter Sassi, research scientist at the ICRF's statistics and epidemiology department, said: "The basic screening programme is working well and mortality is falling more rapidly than ever before. We estimate that if it had not been for screening, the amount of cervical cancer in 1992 would have been 75 per cent higher — which should reassure women of the value of regular screening."

The study, published in the British Journal of Cancer, looked at the screening histories of 348 women with cervical cancer, compared to 677 healthy women. Based on the results it is estimated that screening prevented between 1,100 and 3,900 cases of cervical cancer in 1992 alone. However, there are still more 3,500 new cases of cervical cancer each year in British women under the age of 70, and the study suggests the screening programme has the potential to prevent 1,250 of those.

The ICRF is supporting the addition to the routine screening programme of an extra test for a virus, known as HPV, which is believed to play a role in triggering the cancer. It is estimated this test could save an additional 500 to 1,000 lives a year. Jack Cuzick, head of the ICRF's statistics and epidemiology department, said: "We need to develop new approaches if we are to make further strides towards eliminating this disease."

Elsie Lynch-Farmery, former chairman of the co-ordinators, said: "We have found it feasible routinely to audit the screening programme and would like to see this done nationally." There were 1,369 deaths from cervical cancer in England and Wales in 1994 — but during the 1970s the figure was above 2,000. The target for the programme is to reduce deaths to below 1,000. Currently 85 per cent of women eligible for the programme are coming forward to be screened, although in some inner city areas fewer than 50 per cent do so.

Record flights abroad for Easter break

Alex Bellon

THE Easter break has seen record numbers of people fly abroad, with passengers passing through Gatwick up 15 per cent on last year. Almost 1 million people will travel through Gatwick, London's second largest airport, in the Easter fortnight, with 2 million using Heathrow. Gatwick's duty manager:

Keith Booker, said yesterday that the favourite destinations were the United States, the Caribbean, and Spanish and Mediterranean resorts, although short breaks for skiing trips and rugby tours were also popular. He said: "Next weekend is the peak, with 80,000 expected to pass through the terminals on Saturday and 87,000 on Sunday." A spokesman for Heathrow said 150,000 people passed

through yesterday. The busiest day over Easter was Thursday, with 165,000 people. The most popular destinations were Florida, the Far East, Eilat on the Red Sea, and Turkey. Fog caused eight transatlantic Gatwick flights to be diverted to Birmingham, Stansted, and elsewhere. The long weekend ended yesterday with the mildest day of the year so far in many areas, particularly on the east

coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, with temperatures in the low 60s Fahrenheit in some parts. Belfast reached 63 degrees. Eastern parts were expected to be mild again today, but a Weather Centre spokesman warned that rain was coming tomorrow, to be followed by cooler weather by the weekend. Motorists faced delays last night due to Easter traffic. The AA reported more than

5,000 vehicles an hour leaving the West Country and Wales — double the normal weekend load — causing congestion eastbound on the M4 and northbound on the M5. In the North, traffic on the M65 was nose-to-tail southbound as thousands of people headed home from Blackpool. But the motoring organisations said that, as children were still on holiday, the rush back might be staggered over the week.

In the Commons, ministers of the crown read rapidly from scripts prepared for them by some Wykehamist in their private office, pausing only to scratch their private parts. This ensures that no hostages are offered up to fortune. Julian Critchley

Seoul orders troops to shoot first

Andrew Higgins
in Hong Kong

PRESIDENT Kim Young-sam ordered South Korea's military commanders yesterday to "immediately repel any provocation" by North Korea, as opponents accused his ruling party of exploiting tension to increase support in the elections on Thursday.

South Korean soldiers have been told to open fire on any North Korean troops who cross into the southern half of a demilitarized buffer zone which slices through the peninsula.

The order, reported last night by South Korea's Yon-

hap news agency, overturns a policy of issuing warnings before shooting. It also signals Seoul's determination to halt what Mr Kim yesterday condemned as Pyongyang's "reckless provocations".

Such acts, Mr Kim told the generals in command of South Korea's 650,000 troops, could no longer be tolerated.

North Korea sent armed soldiers into the joint security area at Panmunjom on three consecutive days from Friday. None appears to have penetrated the southern half of the zone, which lies only 30 miles from the South Korean capital, Seoul.

Just as Chinese missile tests helped Taiwan's incumbent president to a landslide victory two weeks ago, the in-

ursions into Panmunjom have lifted the fortunes of President Kim's scandal-tainted administration.

Beijing and Pyongyang are no longer as close as "lips and teeth", a pledge under which they fought together in the 1950-53 Korean War, but they still share a contempt for elections — and a flair for misjudging the dynamics of democracy.

Mr Kim summoned his generals to an emergency conclave yesterday — and invited television cameras to film the meeting. He has seized on the crisis to wrong-foot his political foes before the election.

Until Pyongyang declared the 1993 armistice defunct last Thursday and sent soldiers on brief excursions into Pan-

US dismisses invasion threat

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton and the South Korean president, Kim Young-sam, will discuss the tension in Korea at a meeting next week, but the United States sees no imminent threat of invasion from the North.

the White House said yesterday.

"We haven't seen anything that indicates an offensive build-up that implies hostilities of that nature," its spokesman said. — Reuter.

Washington is keen to avoid an escalation of tension in case it upsets a scheduled visit to Seoul next week by President Clinton.

Mr Clinton is seen as the main target of North Korea's belligerence. North Korea hopes to pressure Washington into negotiating a formal peace treaty to replace the 1953 truce, a task the US insists should be done by Seoul and Pyongyang.

So far, however, North Korea's diplomatic objectives have been overshadowed by the political fallout from its brinkmanship.

Before Pyongyang pushed national security to the centre of South Korea's election campaign, the ruling New Korea Party appeared to be in

danger of losing its majority in Thursday's vote. Opinion polls conducted before the incursions showed a quarter of the electorate undecided.

"I don't understand why North Korea helps the ruling party at each election," said Chang Eul-byung, leader of the opposition liberal Democratic Party. Revulsion at Pyongyang's bombing of a South Korean passenger plane in 1987 helped secure victory a few weeks later for Roh Tae-woo, a former general since arrested on charges of taking bribes.

A South Korean newspaper cartoon yesterday showed North Korean soldiers as campaign workers cheering on Mr Kim's party.

North Korea's actions have

damaged opposition politicians who favour a more conciliatory approach towards Pyongyang. Among those who will probably suffer are allies of Kim Dae-jung, a one-time dissident vilified by South Korea's military in the past as a pro-Pyongyang left-winger.

In another blast of rhetoric likely to rally support behind South Korea's ruling party, Pyongyang accused Seoul yesterday of preparing to launch an attack in Cambodia the US.

"The South Korean puppets must know that if they regard the North's warning as empty talk and display war hysteria, they will face an irrevocable disaster," thundered Pyongyang's official newspaper Rodong Simun.

News in brief

Turkish forces 'kill 90 Kurd guerrillas'

TURKISH security forces have killed 90 Kurdish guerrillas in the south-east of the country in clashes in which 27 soldiers also died, the Anadolu news agency said yesterday. The fighting took place in the mountainous north of the province of Diyarbakir and in the nearby Bingol province. The agency did not say when.

Fighting between security forces and Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) rebels has increased recently despite a unilateral guerrilla ceasefire four months ago. The deputy prime minister, Nihat Metazo, said that 64 PKK fighters were killed in Diyarbakir province but it was not clear if they were part of the same death toll. — Reuter, Ankara.

UN team enters Ogoniland

A UNITED NATIONS team turned its attention yesterday to Nigeria's volatile Ogoniland, a major focus of its mission to investigate the execution of nine minority rights activists, including the writer Ken Saro-Wiwa. The four-man team has left for Port Harcourt, capital of the south-eastern Rivers State of which Ogoniland is a part, on a three-day visit.

The local authorities and Ogoni minority rights activists have exchanged accusations about human rights abuses there. John Kpalap, a co-ordinator of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni Peoples, said the security forces arrested 19 people, including women, on Sunday. But Fidelis Agbaki, press secretary to the military administrator, denied this. "Some people are trying to cause trouble in the name of Ogoni, but we are on the look-out for them." — Reuter, Port Harcourt.

Colombo takes extra powers

THE Sri Lankan government extended a state of emergency nationwide yesterday to give itself the power to postpone local elections, a member of the ruling People's Alliance coalition said. "The opposition will love this," the alliance MP said. "It means they don't have to test themselves at the polls and they can criticise the government [for pulling out of the democratic process]."

The Speaker of parliament said President Chandrika Kumaratunga had invoked emergency powers to extend the state of emergency. Local elections are due by June. The state of emergency, in effect in Colombo and the north and east for a year, gives the police and armed forces wide powers of detention and arrest and allows the president to make regulations. — Reuter, Colombo.

Cohens mass for prayer

THOUSANDS of Jews named Cohen held Passover prayers yesterday at the Western Wall in Jerusalem (right), while a group of about 40 extremists tried to push their way into a Muslim holy site.



Hundreds of police and soldiers stood guard as worshippers named Cohen ("priest" in Hebrew) performed the triennial blessing of the Jewish people. The Cohens are considered descendants of the high priest of the second Jewish Temple, destroyed in the first century, of which the wall is the last remnant, and have special obligations. — AP, Jerusalem.

Flushed with grace

THE cleanliness of Singapore's public toilets and its people's ability to sing and appreciate good music are markers of progress towards a more gracious society, according to the prime minister, Goh Chok Tong.

He was quoted by the Straits Times newspaper as saying it would take 15 to 20 years to make Singapore more gracious, "to complement what we continue to do on the economic side". He said the environment ministry, which conducted a survey of public toilets four years ago, would do so every four to five years, to gauge how far social behaviour and concern for public property had improved. Reuter, Singapore.



One-way ... Streets are named after Marx and Lenin, but the West Bengal government is accused of betraying workers PHOTOGRAPH PABLO BARTHLOMEW

Mills idle as West Bengal turns right

Suzanne Goldenberg reports from Phuleswar Junction on hardship brought by market forces to a communist-ruled state

SUJIT GHORAU's hands are idle now, but for 25 years they transformed the pulpy stalks of the jute plant into money. Winding, twisting, loading bobbins, shovelling waste: a lifetime in the mills of West Bengal.

In a state where an elected Communist government has ruled for 19 years, you could be forgiven for expecting workers at Kanoria Jute Industries to lead a comfortable enough existence, respected for their hard work.

Jute, indigo, tea: these were the commodities on which an empire was built, and Bengal was the largest producer of jute in the world. Trade unionists say the hulking white mill, between the Ganges and the mainline railway, is part of a history of radicalism.

Kanoria remains the stuff of legend, although of a more tragic kind. Two years ago the workers revolted against attempts to cut their pay. When a rail blockade failed, they threw out the management and declared they would run the mill on their own. They promised free canteens, cradle-to-grave medical care, and a rise in the 900 rupees (£17) a month that experi-

enced workers were taking home.

Farmers drifted in from nearby villages, marveling at the bravery of the Kanoria workers; peasant women gave their jewellery to the relief fund and Calcutta's intellectuals held solidarity meetings. But after a week, the Calcutta high court ordered the mill to close, and ever since it has limped from crisis to crisis, with go-slows, lay-offs and, says he always wanted to bring industry to West Bengal, but was previously obstructed by central government bureaucracy.

There are other ready explanations for the apparent transformation of leftwing ideology. "Without industry, capitalism cannot be developed, and without full-fledged development of capitalism, how will socialism be developed?" said Anil Biswas, editor of Ganasakti, the party newspaper. "We shall never sacrifice the cause of the working class, but they must be responsible and improve production and capacity."

Virtually everyone expects Mr Basu's government to be returned to power in next month's state and general elections, thanks largely to

a vote by introducing *panchayats* — elected councils. But in 1984 the state government launched a new industrial policy, declaring its allegiance to the market reforms that the rest of India had embraced a few years earlier, and courting foreign investors.

West Bengal's embrace of capitalism is testimony to the overriding will of Mr Basu, aged 62, who is held in such awe here that he was able to ignore the grumblings of traditional elements in the party. Mr Basu, who won his first election victory 20 years ago in the legislative assembly under colonial rule, says he always wanted to bring industry to West Bengal, but was previously obstructed by central government bureaucracy.

"The government looked on benignly. They took industry as a class war, with the industrialists representing the bourgeoisie and the workers representing the proletariat. Industries were nationalised at the drop of a hat, and the signal went out to workers that they lost nothing by being militant."

The government would like to believe the about-face has paid off. Mr Chakrabarti reels off a list of multinational

firms which he says are about to set up shop in West Bengal, claiming that the state had attracted up to 41 billion rupees (£790 million) in foreign investment by August 1995, the second largest share of any state after Maharashtra.

However, businessmen say the figures are based only on signed memorandums of understanding that have yet to be translated into action.

Moreover, Mr Basu appears powerless to stop the decline of the industries on which West Bengal was built.

The jute industry has been in slow decline for the last 50 years, as the traditional packaging material has been replaced by plastics.

The new jute mill owners, who bought in as the factories were going under, seem more concerned with extracting the last profits from a dying industry than in investing in the new plant that could save it. Many have skimmed off workers' pension funds and used the threat of permanent closure to tame the unions.

West Bengal now has 5 million registered unemployed. Eleven of the state's 60 jute mills are shut, along with cotton and other factories.

"Why should we lament a decaying industry when we can develop it? Why do we have to have new industry when we can build on what we have?" asked Purnendu Basu, an adviser to the union at Kanoria.

What Mr Bouchard is counting on is that his popularity as the saviour and modern personification of a separate Quebec will carry him and his party through. He has said there will be another referendum on sovereignty, but not until around 1998.

But he is already having to reassure voters that the dream of independence, which supporters came within 1 per cent of realising in October, still exists and can still be attained.

There are plans to cut the transport budget: more than \$2 million will be taken out of the courts system; six jails are to be shut. Prison guards are already warning of strikes if the jail closure plan goes ahead; Mr Bouchard can only hope that his charisma will prevent other protests when the cuts come.

"What's sure is that he can't go anywhere but down from now on. Mr Bouchard was never really under attack and now it will start," a polling organisation said.

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Quebec saviour tested by cuts

Claire Trovato in Toronto

QUEBEC'S popular separatist leader, Lucien Bouchard, is hoping that his image as the province's most favoured son will still shine despite the bitter economic message he utters constantly.

It is six months since the separatists narrowly lost the referendum on sovereignty and three months since Mr Bouchard left his job as opposition leader to be acclaimed leader of the Parti Québécois and head of the Quebec government. The honeymoon with the voters, who clearly adore him, may soon be over.

According to Mr Bouchard, separation from the Canadian federation is still the *raison d'être* of the Parti Québécois — but to reach that goal the province must first have a sound economy.

So the tough words which have rung out from the federal government and the other provinces over the last three years — "we have to cut the deficit" — now echo across Quebec.

The latest government spending figures for next year show a \$1.17 billion drop (\$590 million). But the estimated deficit for the financial year just ended reaches \$3.8 billion.

As many as 5,000 jobs are likely to go when the Bouchard squeeze hits the health service; social welfare has already been cut. The province has an official jobless rate of almost 11 per cent, so any contraction in the economy is going to be watched carefully and felt painfully.

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Dudayev blames 'third force'

David Hearst in Moscow

AS RUSSIAN forces, oblivious to President Boris Yeltsin's ceasefire declaration, closed in on rebels holding three towns in southern Chechnya yesterday, the Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev accused the president's closest advisers of sabotaging last week's peace initiative.

In his first response to the proposal, General Dudayev blamed a "red-brown" alliance of Russian political leaders for the continued military onslaught against Chechen villages.

Gen Dudayev named a bewildering range of political and military figures, most of whom have opposed the Chechnya campaign, as the men responsible for the carnage. His list included the Moscow mayor, Yuri Luzhkov; the deputy defence minister, Boris Gromov; the nationalist politician and general Alexander Lebed; and the former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev.

Gen Dudayev said this "third force" of Russian nationalists, to which Mr Gromov and Gen Lebed belong, was behind the bombing of villages which had signed up to the peace deal. He also accused them of organising assassination attempts on the former head of Russian forces General Anatoli Romov and the president's representative in Chechnya, Oleg Lobov.

He said they had "openly discredited" Mr Yeltsin's decree to stop fighting and begin talks mediated by the presidents of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

On Saturday Mr Yeltsin sent a telegram to Gen Dudayev declaring: "In line with my decree, regular checks have shown that military activities by the federal forces have stopped. You will no longer find that our forces have initiated military adventures anywhere."

These comments, and a statement on Sunday by the Russian prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, calling for Mr Yeltsin's plan to be implemented by everyone, have called into question whether

the Russian forces in Chechnya are under the president's control.

Russian military commanders in Chechnya have consistently warned that fighting would not stop immediately, and reserved the right to hot pursuit, or "special operations" to dissolve "bandit armed formations".

The chief warmonger is Lieutenant-General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, the joint commander of the Russian forces. He is determined to press home the advantage his forces have achieved in a two-month offensive which has pushed Chechen forces back to their mountain strongholds.

Russian commanders are keen to avoid the mistakes made a year ago after the Chernomyrdin called a halt to the military offensive. Direct negotiations with Gen Dudayev's top commanders led to a military and political stalemate and allowed the rebels to leave the mountains and return to their villages.

Yesterday the siege of three towns continued: Vedeno, in the foothills, which is loyal to the guerrilla fighter Shamil Basayev; Dargi, and Gokoye, south of the regional capital Grozny.

Fighting has been intensive, with Russians saying more than 30 soldiers were killed and 67 wounded on Friday in Gokoye alone. Since the fighting on March 31, aerial bombardments of villages have continued, which Russian forces have denied carrying out.

More than a week after launching his initiative, Mr Yeltsin will begin tomorrow the politically humiliating process of meeting his top security officials to discuss how to implement his plan. The nationalities minister, Vyacheslav Mikhailov, said Mr Yeltsin would meet members of a newly-appointed Chechnya commission headed by Mr Chernomyrdin.

Islamist spats in London lend the regime room to manoeuvre, David Hirst in Riyadh writes

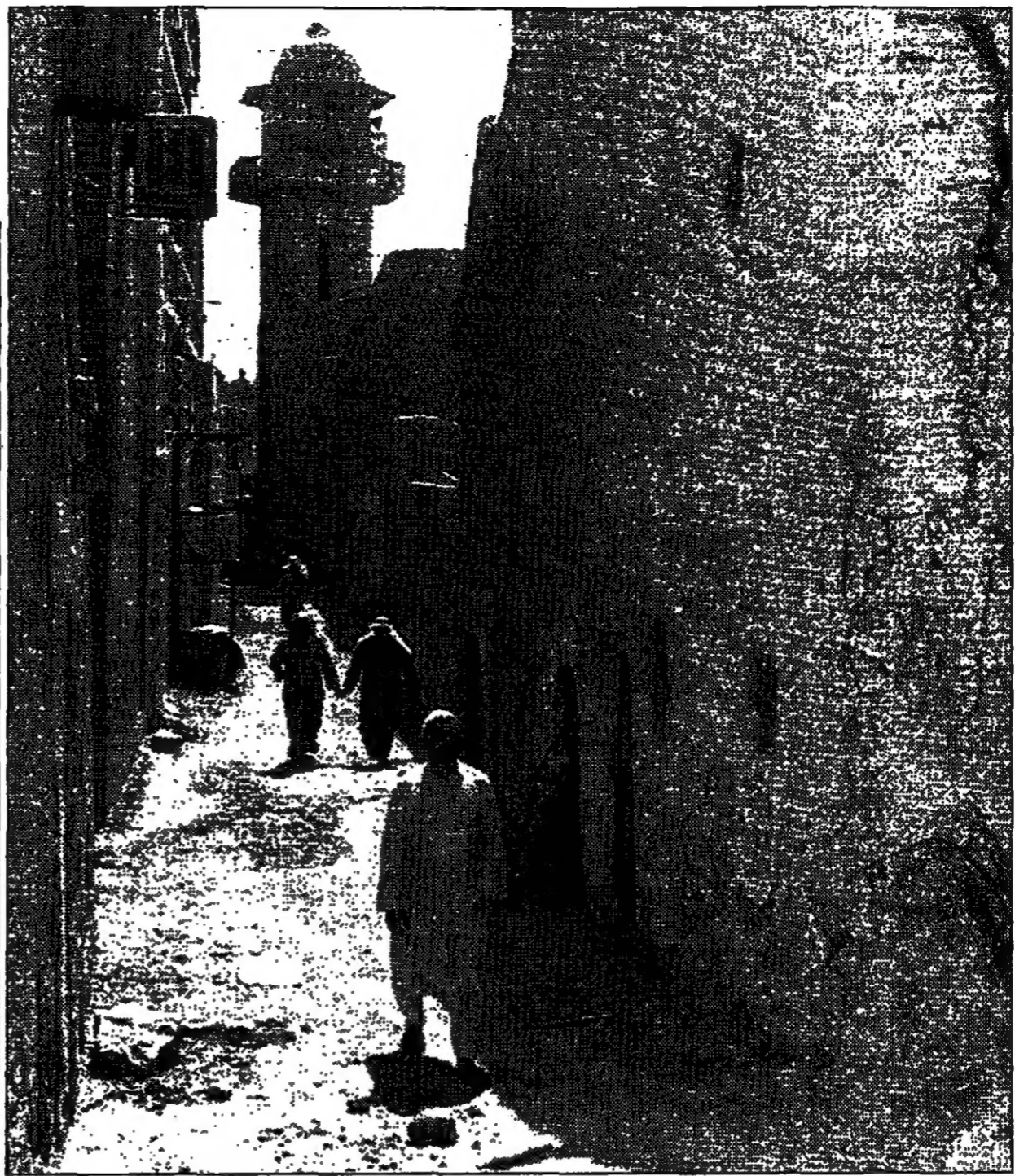
NO SOONER had Mohammed al-Mas'ari won his hearing against the CDLR which he heads and a new rival, the Islamic Reform Movement, headed by his former deputy, Saad al-Faqih.

The CDLR's break-up received far less attention in Britain than the Saudis — think it should have. Senior princes with little experience of the outside world harbour resentments towards the British government. But a younger, liberal, British-educated prince said the British media were chiefly to blame.

"Some of us are losing faith in the values you claim to represent. You made such a fuss of them as political refugees, but you never really looked into Mas'ari's chequered personal and professional past — his real beliefs. And now that with this scandal, they have come out in their true colours, you have lost interest. You just ignore them."

"Can't you see that it's people like Mas'ari who, in their politically humiliating process of meeting his top security officials to discuss how to implement his plan, the nationalities minister, Vyacheslav Mikhailov, said Mr Yeltsin would meet members of a newly-appointed Chechnya commission headed by Mr Chernomyrdin.

Mr Mikhailov told a news conference yesterday that the commission would be entitled to change the plan, with Mr Yeltsin's consent. "To lessen the number of provocations — and I agree that they are on both sides — there must be immediate joint checks."



Land of contradictions... A street in the medieval part of Riyadh, far in spirit from the Saudi capital's modern districts

the local CDLR denounced him, too.

The House of Saud would have been saintly not to exploit these personal charges, along with the ideological schism. It has been the target of similar charges from the CDLR, and it hopes they will tarnish the moral pretensions of the whole Islamist opposition.

One expert on the Islamists said: "It is a golden opportunity for the regime to portray Mas'ari and Faqih as extremist nuts. I never could understand how this pair could work together."

For Mr Mas'ari, it now transpires, has links with the tiny extremist Tahrir party, originating in Jordan, while Dr Faqih is more of a classical Islamist Brother.

The expert added: "They get on with each other about as well as Stalinists and Maoists once did. I forecast that Mas'ari will now descend into silly radicalism, calling for such things as the re-establishment of the Caliphate."

Saudi society breaks down into two main camps — Westernised liberals and various shades of Islamists. The Islamist schism is a relief to the liberals, who had mixed feelings about Mr Mas'ari from the outset. They could admire his courage and ingenuity. His far war against the royal

'I have no liking for the ruling family but I would fight with them against Mas'ari, who would return us to the Stone Age'

liberals embarrases the Islamists. The broad goal of the Islamists — or those who think like Mr Mas'ari — is revolutionary, almost unique, in Muslim history: a clerically led state, with religious "commissars" in every department, which would probably be even more archaic and totalitarian in spirit than Khomeini's Iran.

London to learn which princes take commissions, which ministers abuse their positions. It was almost as if the two, unable to agree on fundamentals, resorted to trash propaganda instead. Besides, they got so much wrong.

Anything that relieves the

strength from the same constituency as it does — the deeply devout, conservative Nejd heartland. The CDLR's establishment in London was a shrewd move, since it placed the Islamist struggle in the context of the worldwide human rights movement where it given some of its members' obscurantist beliefs — it does not belong.

Now, with their narrow sectarian rivalries exposed, it will be harder for the exile groups to command the support of Western liberals.

At home, the Islamist movement has never been united, being composed of individual preachers and coeries in universities and religious organisations. The CDLR break-up will add to confusion in Islamist ranks.

of official policies that helped breed them in the first place.

One liberal said: "It is all very well for the government to attack Britain for giving Mas'ari refuge, he and his like are its own creation."

The House of Saud has always been more forward-looking than the state-appointed *ulema* (religious scholars) who, in theory at least, share authority with it, and often more than the populous. But in its obsession with proving itself Islamically irreproachable, it helped create the moral climate in which the Islamists emerged.

It gave free rein to its official clerical establishment on any matters of rite, theology and jurisprudence where its own legitimacy was not called into question. Yet nothing so resembles Sheikh bin Baz — the regime's top cleric and author of a learned treatise proving the earth to be flat — as much of the Islamist opposition.

They are his disciples in Wahhabism. They turned against him only because he maintained that the House of Saud was a true upholder of this most puritanical of Muslim schools, while they decided it was not.

This fight between establishment and dissident Wahhabism is often obscure. But it is intimately bound up with the contradictions of a land split between ancient and modern, native and universal, stifling social and cultural conventions and abundant financial and technological resources.

One moderate Islamist said: "Look at the dichotomy. Bin Baz and the *ulema* say interest amounts to 'war on God' (grivous sin), but not only are interest-based banks everywhere, true Islamic banks are forbidden. They say women should cover their faces, not drive or mix with men, but then on TV we see ladies in nightgowns and there are hair-stylists all over the place."

In the current climate of religiosity, it would not be surprising if young men took Sheikh bin Baz at his word, and bombed banks. No one knows who planted the carbombs that killed four Americans, but many say it was an "Afghan" — one of those militant idealists whom Saudi Arabia sent to Afghanistan to fight the Russians, and who returned thinking their own government was a godless, US-supported abomination.

Islamism may be in retreat, but it will revive if the regime does not change the agenda, and address the real political and economic issues that face it, instead of competing in the show of Islamist virtue.

A liberal said: "I have no special liking for the ruling family, but many say it was an 'Afghan' — one of those militant idealists whom Saudi Arabia sent to Afghanistan to fight the Russians, and who returned thinking their own government was a godless, US-supported abomination."

Letters, page 8

Muslim in hiding for nine months

A Bosnian on the run in Serb territory has finally reached safety, writes Samir Arnaut in Frkici

DASAN ORIC, a Bosnian Muslim, on the run after the Serb conquest of Srebrenica, hid in hostile territory for nine months before he heard the Bosnia peace deal had been signed.

He is one of six Muslim men from Srebrenica, formerly UN-protected "safe area", who ended a harrowing odyssey by entering the Bosnian government city of Tuzla on Saturday.

Yesterday he and his family were given a temporary home in the village of Frkici.

"When I reached the police station in Kalesija [on the government side of ceasefire line east of Tuzla] I still couldn't believe I was in our free territory," said Mr Oric, who is 45 but looks 20 years older.

His wife, Tija, added: "I

Tuzla. "The largest number of bones was in Kamenica, near Bratunac, where the biggest ambush took place," he said.

After Srebrenica was captured, Bosnia's war continued for a further three months. In December the Muslims, Croats and Serbs signed the Dayton peace accord.

"After nine months we decided to go to Tuzla. I knew of the Dayton peace deal because I listened to the radio I had with me. That was crucial in our decision," Mr Oric said.

It was his second attempt to reach the government stronghold 50 miles northwest of Srebrenica.

"When Srebrenica fell we first headed towards Tuzla and were soon ambushed near Kamenica. We scattered amid shooting. Many of us were killed. I saw at least 100 men fall dead there," he said.

He escaped but was later captured by Serbs. "They were going to kill me when a group of our [escaping] fighters opened fire on them," he said. During the skirmish he fled. He found a hollow tree and hid there for two days.

After attempts to cross Bosnia's Serb lines failed, he headed for his native village, Lehovica, on the outskirts of Srebrenica, in mid-August. He spent the next eight months there. He was joined by five other Muslim men from Srebrenica. They hid in a dugout.

"Those with me were boys, 15, 16 years of age, so I had to look after them," Mr Oric said. "At night we would dig postholes from fields. When those ran out we relied on what flour we had and corn we managed to harvest."

When Serb patrols came nearer, they moved to another dugout as the first snow of winter fell.

"There was no food, water or firewood. Those days were terrible," he said. "Those nine months seemed like nine years. But now I want to go back home."

That prospect is unlikely at the moment as Srebrenica was allotted to the Serbs under the Dayton accords.

Srebrenica refugees in Tuzla are reassured, however, by the arrival of UN war crimes investigators examining suspected mass graves. — Reuters.

News in brief

Russia scores first with US satellite launch

RUSSIA will launch a US-built satellite for the first time today under a \$1 billion programme, opening a new chapter in US-Russian space co-operation.

Sergei Zhilov, spokesman for the Khruuchev Space Centre, which makes the Proton booster rocket, said the Astra-1F telecommunications satellite would be launched

from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

It will be the first of 20 unmanned satellite launches planned by the year 2000 under an agreement between the space centre — once the hub of the Soviet space programme — and the US-backed joint venture International Launch Services.

"This is a new page in co-

operation between the United States and Russia in the commercial use of the Proton booster on the international market," Mr Zhilov said.

He said the Astra network had about 150 million users in Europe and the satellite would remain in orbit for 15 years.

The site is leased by Russia from Kazakhstan. — Reuter.

Beijing swipes at Britain

Beijing attacked Britain yesterday as a committee responsible for reasserting Chinese control over Hong Kong prepared to hold its first meeting in the British colony.

Beijing-funded papers published a letter in which the Chinese government's human rights record, accused London of conspiring to retain control after the transfer of power in June next year, and even derided the British diet. — Reuter.

Molester released

Convicted child molester Larry McCauley, aged 32, who had threatened to kill his next victim if the state does not castrate him, was released from prison yesterday and placed in a halfway house in San Antonio, Texas state officials said. — Reuter.

Eruption 'close'

The volcano in Montserrat's Soufriere Hills could explode within days, scientists on the Caribbean island warned yesterday on the sixth day of heightened alert. — Reuter.

Chill kills 600

Six hundred people froze to death in Moscow this winter and two others were killed by falling icicles. All had been drinking, city authorities said yesterday. — Reuter.

Boy shoots mother

A Turkish boy aged 11 shot dead his sleeping mother in the town of Bucra on the orders of his father, who suspected her of having affairs, local newspapers reported yesterday. — Reuter.

Tehran trying to topple Labour, claims Peres

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

IRAN is pressing Islamist groups to mount more attacks in Israel, according to the Israeli prime minister, Shimon Peres. He accused Tehran of working to bring down Israel's Labour-led government in next month's general election.

In an interview published in yesterday's Jerusalem Post, Mr Peres said Iran was trying to "unsettle a government of peace because it wants to unsettle peace."

He went on: "For this, I have one hundred per cent evidence... they are pressing upon Islamic Jihad and other subversive organisations to act against Israel before the elections."

The prime minister declined to be more specific about the evidence. But he reminded delegates at a Labour Party meeting yesterday that arms and explosives had recently been found on an Iranian ship bound for Hamburg. The discovery was made in the Belgian port of Antwerp in the past two weeks.

The Israeli army, meanwhile, has laid yet another charge against Iran. It said that Shin Bet (secret service) agents had captured a Palestinian member of Islamic Jihad, who confessed that he was secretly training in Iran.

The man, Khalil Abu Ita, from the Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, told Shin Bet interrogators he had been recruited while studying medicine in Turkey.

The army spokesman said Abu Ita had been given a fake Iranian passport and had flown to Iran last August to receive combat and weapons instruction. He was captured on March 12 when he tried to return home.

Israel has mounted a determined diplomatic assault on Iran in recent weeks, with enthusiastic US backing. At the spectacular summit of the peacemakers in the Egyptian

resort of Sharm el-Sheikh last month, Mr Peres attacked Tehran, though he failed to win summit endorsement of his call for sanctions.

Many observers believe that though there is genuine concern about Iran's involvement with Islamist militants, the government's main motive is to plant the suggestion that Tehran wants Labour to lose the election and that, by implication, the Islamists who oppose the peace process are on the same side as the rightwing Likud opposition.

The Iranian ambassador to Sarajevo, Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian, commenting on reports that it secretly sent arms to Bosnian Muslims, said yesterday it had supplied humanitarian aid to Bosnia through legal and official channels.

Leader comment, page 8

I must say I thought her very restrained. She cried softly at dinner, and was sick so politely I never even noticed and didn't even look drunk to me. Michele Hanson

Quebec saviour tested by cuts

RAC

The children come first
Conference clips don't teach the full lesson

FACTIONAL FIGHTS at the April round of teachers' conferences have become as familiar as Easter egg hunts. Moderates were right, even though unsuccessful yesterday, to seek to regain control. Few issues have more demeaned the teaching profession than the televised clips of hard left, head-in-the-cloud militants seeking to use schools as the launch pad for the overturn of the current economic system.

plained about the falling standards of primary school-leavers. What teachers don't like is the high profile which the Chief Inspector has given to the issue — plus the new proposal to require all teachers to be graded one to seven. If standards are to be raised, incompetent teachers will have to be weeded out — a policy which has been endorsed by Labour's David Blunkett. The Chief Inspector has made it clear that evidence gathered during an inspection will not be substantial enough in itself to lead to a dismissal. But head teachers will be informed, confidentially, of the weak — as well as the excellent — teachers whom inspectors identify. Head teachers wanted this. For the rank-and-file to oppose this is to put the interests of producers (teachers) before consumers (children).

A tale without instruction

When the US gave a broad wink to Tehran's arms for Bosnia

BEEFING UP the Bosnian army is fine — so long as the Iranians don't do it. That at least is the current US position. Washington is eager to ship a whole range of weapons to strengthen the Sarajevo government against the Bosnian Serbs, and unhappy that its European allies are more concerned to reduce rather than increase military strengths in the area. So far the only military equipment pledged to Bosnia has been a \$100 million American tranche, and another \$700 million of arms is still awaiting sponsorship.

bargo" which had been imposed by the Security Council upon all the participants in the war. The spirit was something rather different. In spite of Bob Dole's efforts this episode is not about to become Bill Clinton's tringate — not least because Mr Dole himself was at the time in favour of arming the Bosnians. So was the Clinton White House which, give or take a few wobbles, favoured a "lift (the embargo) and strike (the Bosnian Serbs)" policy. The second half of the policy eventually prevailed and it was always clear that arms were getting through to the Bosnian government with, presumably, some degree of US acquiescence. Yet there is a deeper sort of parallel with the original Irangate in the inconsistency of an administration which gives a collusive nod to Tehran when it seems expedient, only to denounce the Iranians later as the fount of all subversion.

Riding into a right royal sunset

Oh the oak and the yew and the Royal Company of Archers

THE EASTER shower of Royal stories has produced an embarrassment of choice. There was the complex tale of bank statement journalism involving Panorama's Martin Bashir and his interview with Princess Diana. There was the stampee of polo ponies, one of which chomped through a flower bed in Ascot, and the sad tale of Lord Palmer, loyal to his monarch but forced to resign from the Royal Company of Archers. And more we won't mention.

could be forgiven for describing the Duke of York who went to her aid as "portly man". Lord Palmer's disgrace, after allowing his castle to be used for the film "Princess in Love", may be a blessing in disguise. How else would we ever have learnt that the Royal Company of Archers parade in green jackets carrying yew bows and that their Captain-General Lord Clydesmuir is known as Gold Stick for Scotland? Perhaps these stories could have been more handily woven into one thematic whole. The ponies' stampee would then be halted by the entire Royal Company of Archers practising in Windsor Great Park. Lord Palmer, seizing the first mount, would be pardoned. He could then be interviewed by Mr Bashir who would verify, with photographs, the sum paid for renting out his Edwardian mansion. It might mean taking a few liberties with the truth, but plenty have been taken already.



Letters to the Editor

On a left-wing and a prayer

IT IS such a pity that the label "Christian Socialist" is being used in such an imprecise way (Tony Blair's Christian attack, April 9). Clearly it does not mean "a Christian who votes for the Labour Party", nor does it imply that the Christian vote ought to be so directed. For Tony Blair, it seems that the contrast is between those committed to wealth creation through motives of self-interest (thereby benefiting one hopes, the rest of the community) and those for whom the community comes first.

NEARLY 15 years ago, a friend now climbing to dizzy heights in the Tory party was lamenting the broadly held belief that the only people with any ideals or altruism must be socialists and that to be virtuous and a Conservative were incompatible. He extended his extremely able mind in the pursuit of a positive image to justify his allegiance to the Conservatives. All he came up with were notions of efficient management and business sense. The latest howl of pain suggests that the Tories know they have failed, in the intervening years, to

find anything better to cloak their philosophy and that they've blown the efficiency and managerial claims too. S J Clarke, 45 Church Street, Hayfield, High Peak SK12 5JE. TONY Blair has got something right but did not go far enough. Christianity may be summed-up as "succour the weak, the sick and the poor at the expense of the strong, the healthy and the rich". Post-1979 Conservatism puts it the opposite way round: "Support the strong, the healthy and the rich at the expense of the weak, the sick and the poor". Tony Freke, Brook Cottage, Grove Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 1UH.

SO David Wilshire, convenor of the Methodist Fellowship at the House of Commons, says politicians should not explain their ideology in terms of their religious beliefs? That well-known Methodist Donald Soper used to say he was opposed to gambling because he was a socialist and that he was a socialist because he was a Christian. Of course you can't separate strongly-held religious beliefs from political ideology and

A fax from Al-Massari

DAVID HIRST spent too much time in the sun in Riyadh or perhaps he fell into bad company (Satellites evade Saudi censors, April 9). The Saudi opposition is fighting for an elected, accountable government in our country. Surely this is more than a shade different from the Saudi regime which has never permitted any elections at any time in its history? Of course, the basic "constitution" of Arabia would be Islamic; 99.99 per cent of our people are sincere Muslims. Why is that different from the German constitution, for example, which requires a commitment to democracy and against fascism from its electoral political parties? Mr Hirst says that our rulers are "fundamentalists". Untrue. They are hypocrites who cloak themselves in their own mutilated version of Islam while violating each and every tenet of the Koran. The Saudi opposition stands for an independent judiciary and a free press able to criticise and shade the elected government. How different from the Riyadh visited by Mr Hirst where the only free information available came by fax from us or via the satellite — except when the Saudi-owned Orbit Communications in Rome blocks out the BBC broadcasts; and where judges are placemen of the tyrants. As a former political prisoner of Al-Hair prison who was tortured there, I am afraid that I did not enjoy the air-conditioned splendour of the jail as described by Mr Hirst. He is wrong too about women drivers. The regime banned them as "un-Islamic"; we demand women's right to drive. Mr Hirst says that "all Saudi fundamentalists end up taking the Christian West as their models". When Mr Gazzali was asked what he thought of "Western civilisation" he replied: "Yes I think that would be a good idea." The Saudi regime exists only because of the West which, in return, turns a blind eye to Saudi corruption, hypocrisy and cruelty. Prof/Muhammad Al-Massari, c/o 7 Millbank, Westminster, London SW1.

Cut it out

ONCE again we've seen common sense trampled by the superficial quick fix so popular in Texan penal matters (Texas to castrate paedophile, April 6). Against expert advice that castration offers no guarantee against child sexual assault, "state authorities bowed to public pressure" to allow a convicted paedophile the surgery that he believes will curb his victimisation of children. As a survivor of a decade of childhood sexual assault I've heard this misinformed claim that castration offers protection so many times now it falls to shock me. When will authorities admit that sexual assault has nothing to do with lust and attraction but everything to do with power and its misuse? The organ that allows its perpetration is the brain, not the genitals. As Collier Cole of the Council on Sex Offender Treatment said: "Surgery is not going to give someone a conscience." Still, considering Texan's enthusiasm for responses to other violent crimes (one third of the US's executions have been carried out in Texas), that they have embraced another blinkered and misinformed "solution" to personal violence surprises me not at all. Julia McEsterian, Elmcroft Street, London E5.



Face it: it's a carve-up

I'VE BECOME resigned to your regular items on self-mutilation and body piercing masquerading as art or philosophy. They disturb my perception of the Guardian, which I have read and admired for a long time, but I usually accept them as an aberration among the serious business. But what can be your rationale for the article on Orhan (Me, my surgeon and my art, April 2)? What effect does an article like this have on those who have no choice but to

live with facial disfigurement? What do you think of her deliberate pursuit of mutilation? And what are the surgeons thinking of when they perform operations that are an obscene travesty of everything they have been trained for? I was infuriated by the "serious art critic" tone of the article about something so ridiculous it would be a joke if it wasn't so tragic. Carol Smith, Crowshaw Grove, Sheffield.

Who minds the childminder?

IN focusing on the limitations of the registration and inspection system for childminders revealed by David Lane's report on the Sheffield childminder case (Childminder checks 'not working', April 6), you miss its major thrust. There is no public policy about who cares for the children of working parents and there is no debate. Childcare is left to individual families to sort out — and the government keeps its head down, hoping that the smokescreen of "educational" initiatives like nursery vouchers will keep parents quiet. Nearly 50 per cent of mothers with children under five work. Nearly three-quarters of women with high educational qualifications now return to work, most within a few months of their children's birth. Economic pressures, lack of parental leave, changing family structures and un-informed employers combine to produce a situation where childminders — who provide the majority of care — are being asked to care for children as young as two weeks old, within a working week which often stretches to 55 hours plus. Surely the case for invest-

ment in standards and training is clear? What we need is not just improved registration and inspection systems but mandatory training for everyone who wants to provide family day care, based on a national scheme which guarantees standards and consistency across the country. Linked to nationally accredited NVQs in Childcare and Education. Sadly, our application to the Department of Health to launch such a scheme has just been turned down. Perhaps will now change its mind. Gill Hazeyne, Chief Executive, National Childminding Association, 3 Masons Hill, Bromley, Kent BR3 9EY.

Cold charity

LADY Thatcher's brand of Tory Good Samaritan Christianity (Mark Lawson Commentary, April 8) would be more convincing if she were to allocate some of the wealth of the Thatcher Foundation to charitable enterprises; for instance, to the provision of asbestos-free housing for the poor of Westminster. Anthony Storr, 45 Chalfont Road, Oxford OX2 6TJ.

Reputations

EDWARD Windsor does nothing to restore the standing of his discredited and disreputable family with his support for the late Wallis Simpson (Paul Foot, April 8). His woman and her second husband (aka the Duke of Windsor) were known and enthusiastic supporters of the Hitler regime, were guests of the Nazi high command in Berlin and associated with prominent French and American extreme right-wing groups. After the start of the second world war, this woman's husband — a British citizen and a serving member of our armed forces — supplied the Germans with militarily useful information. It is likely that this information led to the death or capture of British and French soldiers and could have helped to prolong the war. Yes, she, or rather both of them, should be granted titles — how about "traitor" for starters? Tom Hill, Pemberton Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8.

A Country Diary

SOMERSET: On Palm Sunday, cold but bright, the congregation, choir and clergy with a suitably dignified and doodle donkey, wound in procession through the ancient streets of Sherborne and down over the cobbles of Cheap Street to the Abbey green. There are other traditionally hopeful signs of the Lenten season — spring-heeled lambs, daffodils, late dent and plump buds on the indoor vine. But the Western Gazette's front-page headline says "Cull could kill County" and in Wells Cathedral, the Bishop led prayers for the farming community. In Somerset there were, at the last census, over 4,000 farms owned by the families that farm them, with 139,000 dairy cows and 27,000 beef cattle. In the last week of March this year, no cattle at all were sold at Sturminster Newton market. I went to visit the farm where I had seen a sucking herd of beef cattle in June, when they were only a few months old, wandering with their mothers in a well-watered valley. Now the young bulls are magnificent, substantial beasts, with rounded, muscled shoulders, gleaming coats, and shining eyes. It is easy to see the contrast between them and the relatively slender dairy animals of the same age. Both have been fed on a diet of mother's milk, grass from the farm, and equally home-grown barley. Both are supremely well adapted to their respective tasks — the production of milk or beef. There has never been a case of BSE on this farm. It is impossible to imagine finer specimens of prime, clean beef cattle anywhere else in the world. A week has passed since the time when, last year, their predecessors were fetching premium prices at market. Now, as we watched them consume another day's ration, they and all the dairy care and years of patient learning experience that had gone into bringing them to this point, were effectively worth nothing, since no-one was buying. JOHN VALLINS

صكرا من الامل

Diary

Matthew Norman

I AM pleased to announce that, in keeping with the spirit of the age, the Diary has been privatised. From now on, anyone seeking publicity can buy it, while those officially desperate to see their names in print will be charged automatically, whether they asked for the mention or not. For example, calling him "parliamentary democracy's answer to Benny from Crossroads" did set Jerry Hayes MP back £200, while any reference to Michael Winner's minuscule sperm count will cost him £470 (£400 plus VAT at 17.5 per cent). If the bill is not settled within 30 days, bailiffs will be instructed to distract goods to the value, Vanessa Feitz, David Mellor, Liz Hurley, Jim Davidson, Peter Stringfellow, Paula Yates, Andrew New, Judge Pickles and the Reg Varney doppleganger Tony Banks MP all come into this category. "You're quite right," says Max Clifford. "People who are totally self-obsessed should have to pay whatever the cost." Max sees great business opportunities. "If I want to place a story about Diana — having it off with Diana, for instance — the tabloids won't be too interested if it comes straight from me; it just looks like PR. But if it's in your Diary, in a paper that carries weight like the Guardian, it's got credibility. It could be worth a few grand, certainly. Tell you, you could make a fortune. Max, Max, and I will. Max Clifford has been charged £587.50 (VAT included) for this story.

Real dirt flies in an unreal world

Commentary

Hugo Young

ONE year from now, other things being equal, the election will be coming to an end. As everyone predicts, the campaign will be the dirtiest ever known. Every campaign I remember has been the dirtiest. The political class salivates, watching the dirt start to materialise. Expecting it, we legitimise it, even as we sagely shake our heads. Already the parties are showing they will not let us down. More certain than the fifth, however, will be something more corrosive. Poison we can live with, but emptiness is less forgivable. The void, like the hemlock, is already being prepared. Its narrow modes are clear: unscrupulous aggression about the other side, mute defensiveness about one's own. The Tories are defensive about what they haven't done. Labour about what they will not promise. The Lib Dems, though a

less culpable case, will be lured like the big boys towards the politics of process over substance: perfection of soundbites over dealing with the issues. The big issues will be those the parties run away from. It is a doleful definition but not, I think, a false one. What are these, the real, big, epoch-defining issues? Many lead back to what's called, deadeningly, the environment. They're far from dead, but the word turns them into deadness. How can economic growth be reconciled with sustainable resources? How can more cars co-exist with pure air and the survival of country? How is cutting unemployment consistent with husbandry of the earth? How, again, can a beef industry be reinvented, or else dietary habits altered, to preclude the poisoning of nations? How, in another field, can this nation organise itself to house its people properly? How — the over-arching issue — does the politician of the moment, the prime minister presumptive, address the long-term crisis in many fields that is so plainly consequent on the worship of short-term market forces? Each of these, it can be agreed, is an inescapable question. The answer may be disputable but the question is not invented — and in one paragraph I can only skim the

surface of apocalypse. What about another kind of question, the growth of poverty? And what about all this on a global scale? We sense these problems are terribly real, and getting realer. Yet, in the confines of one nation, their properties are twofold. First, they're not answerable by party, and therefore not addressed by party. Second, anyone who explores them, and thus confesses to a state of perplexity, is a freak who has surrendered any place in the electoral argument. We don't have to wait till next year to watch this. A benchmark moment occurred last week. Real World is a new body set up to highlight the big issues. A unique confederation of more than 30 organisations, ranging from Oxfam, through Friends of the Earth, to Charter 88, has put together a dossier of questions, and the alarming evidence that makes them big, in an effort to re-define the political debate. Its launch was quite an event. The members can claim around two million paying supporters. Even though some of these may be counted twice or more, they obviously constitute a substantial army of the most active citizens in the land. There was something else about them, however. Hardly anyone reported what they had done. The Times, the

Telegraph and the FT didn't carry a word. The tabloids, of course, were nowhere. The BBC didn't mention Real World after lunch-time. C4 News, not usually a slave to stale agendas, missed out completely. The weekend press was customarily uninquiring. All became co-conspirators in silence. They could offer reasons for this. Real World might be called a bunch of do-gooders, whose answers to the questions tend to leftiness rather than the opposite. Some weeks ago, Tony Blair gave the group a footnote mention in his big number one environment. They could be dismissed either as a bogus assemblage of environmentalist third world/social justice/political reform lobbyists who have nothing genuinely in common, or as a typical agit-prop consensus in favour of higher public spending. Actually, the media's neglect has a more obvious root,

All polling evidence shows that faith in progress is no longer the condition of Britain

which is precisely that Real World is challenging the only political shape the media understand, the party shape, which suffers from all the limitations party politicians impose upon it. They verified just what Real World is on about, namely the inability of this vast apparatus that we call the democratic machine to engage with anything that has been pre-empted of all awkward reality by the doctors of anti-philosophy who want to decide what poli-

tics is about. This is an error of gigantic condensation. It misperceives both the actors and the audience in the drama. The people who are making the appeal to reality are not negligible cranks, but active workers in fields that bring them closer to it than most politicians and all editors. They may not have answers to the multiple problems of sustainability, but they live every day with the unadmittable facts that land is thinning, air is poisoning, water is polluting, diversity is narrowing and the poor are always disproportionately suffering. The more politicians conceal without political change such as the parties will not contemplate, all this will get worse. Equally, their audience half-suspects as much already. The more politicians conceal it, the deeper the voters find themselves mired in insecurity and cynicism. All polling evidence shows that faith in progress is no longer the condition of Britain. It's hardly a coincidence that the same evidence shows popular trust in British politicians to be less than half what it was 20 years ago. This weekend, as usual, the papers were full of political games. The American rubbishing of Blair by a Tory advance-guard, the manipulation of TV by Blair, who's smearing whom, can Hoggs survive next year? Pretending to make trouble, it's a screen for complicity. The real dirt of elections is a fatal compact within the political class: on the one hand the candidates, using every artifice to distance themselves from the real problems and mask their terror of solutions; on the other hand the media, stretching and exaggerating and purporting to de-construct political evaluations, but actually buying the same game, partners in a plot that locates politics for ever between the voter and the real world.

How the cat gets out of the bag



Julian Critchley

AS my colleagues take advantage of this brief interlude to prepare for the next season of political gaffes, I cannot help wondering why even the most experienced of politicians drop bricks that bring them into public ridicule. Kenneth Clarke cannot remember which steelworks has been closed down, and has to be gently corrected. Michael Heseltine still seems to believe that, after 30 years of politics, there is such a thing as a "private" meeting. Peter Temple-Morris gives an interview in Ireland to a journal no one this side of the water has ever heard of, and appeals to Dn to give the real problems and mask their terror of solutions; on the other hand the media, stretching and exaggerating and purporting to de-construct political evaluations, but actually buying the same game, partners in a plot that locates politics for ever between the voter and the real world.

ermment. Although he denied it, they could only have been written by Snoch Powell. In 1980, I wrote a notorious article in the Observer, encouraged by John Cole, attacking the policies of Mrs Thatcher's first administration. There was a lull for a week, and then Fleet Street smoked me out. "It was so well written, it could only be by Julian Critchley," was the view of the late Jack Bruce Gardyne. I denied authorship to the Mail (Sir David English told me years later that I should have stuck to my guns), but was obliged to come clean to the chairman of my local party. There was an unholy row and an end to my glittering career. Peter Temple-Morris, who is one of the last of the One-Nation Tories, told the Limerick Bugle, or some such journal, that if he were starting out in politics again, he, for one, would not join today's Conservative Party. This was immediately picked up by the tabloid hacks who cried "traitor" to a man. Peter forgot there is always a stringer who can make a bob or two telling the world. One last example must be mine. I wrote in the Listener describing Mrs Thatcher as "the great she elephant". This was revealed late at night on Tynes-Tees Television, the presenter of some frightful programme. Gillian Reynolds, challenged me to deny my description of "our great leader". I could not, and did not, but was surprised to see my words in every one of the last moment to take the Prime Minister's place at a "private" meeting of umbraged small-businessmen, he discarded John Major's script (Michael is never very happy reading other peoples' texts) and started to improvise. Warning to his theme, he took refuge in anecdotes and told the small-businessmen (worried about what was owed to them by bigger companies) how he, Heseltine, as a young businessman in financial trouble, had used tricks like sending out the cheques with only one signature on them, or with the date incorrectly filled in. All to buy time. Much hilarity must have been created by so frank an admission from the Deputy Prime Minister. But what Michael forgot is that there is no such thing in politics as a private meeting. There will always be some aggrieved person with an axe to grind who is on the blower to the Sun before you can say "cheque". The result was predictable: Michael's "sharp practices" were all over sheets broad and narrow, most of which I forgot to say that he had eventually succeeded in paying back every penny and went on to become a multi-millionaire. In the late 60s, four "turnovers" — that is, articles on the leader page of the Times — were written by someone signing himself "A Conservative". They constituted a bitter attack on the Macmillan gov-

W HEN Peter Tatchell wrote to London Electricity asking for compensation for computer material damaged by an interruption to the power supply (an habitual problem in his south London block), the denial of the request came from Tabitha Hussain (Mrs) of customer relations. It was the company's fault, Mrs Hussain admitted, but ensuring uninterrupted power is the responsibility of the customer. If Mr Tatchell wishes to avoid it happening again, she advised, he could go out and buy himself a generator! It's so simple — but then all the best ideas are!

O H to be my sane and rational friend Paul Johnson at Easter. Bless the old boy's sturdy heart, he's been on typically versatile form this weekend. One moment in the Observer, he's describing heaven as sitting in a Parisian cafe ogling the young Brigitte Bardot dressed as a schoolgirl (Bardot as a schoolgirl, that is, not Paul); the next, in the Sunday Telegraph, he's on about his visit to Rome to see the Pope. When Paul Johnson (I) thrust a fat volume into the frail Pontifical arms, John Paul (II) was at first dismayed, but then — no, we shall let Paul take up the story. "When He saw it was the history of Christianity" — by which I mean Johnson — "in Polish, his splendid old eyes lit and a vast, benevolent grin spread over his face." Prepare to be moved. "I was handed one of the rosaries he delights to give, and another went to my wife Marjorie who, as always when she is supremely happy and uplifted, was weeping." There are no words.

R UTH de Mierre writes from the public relations stronghold of Hayward Heath. "When Martin Jones, head of history at Brighton College, was reading The Adventure Of The Sussex Sea Creature — a Sherlock Holmes pastiche imagined by author Christopher Enby in the sci-fi magazine Scherzerade — he nearly fell off his seat. According to the story, Sherlock Holmes had been to school at Brighton College." How intriguing — and how very droll to end the press release with the word "elementary". On the phone, Mrs de Mierre is bullish about the discovery. I congratulate her for choosing a role model for hundreds of impressionable boys, a manic depressive, emotionally inadequate man with a heavy dependence on opium and cocaine. "Er, I'm not sure that's quite the image" she says quietly, "but we did have the first-ever purpose-built school science lab."



Togetherness... Tony Blair and Bill Clinton all smiles in London last year

Toes in the water

Patrick Wintour argues that Tony Blair will have to tread carefully to gain kudos from his meeting with President Clinton, while Martin Walker, below, plots the points of mutual interest

FORGIVEN trips are not just accidents waiting to happen, they don't bring you votes at home. However, opposition leaders cannot avoid them. They are a necessary part of adding the sheen of statesmanship to your image. America is the only superpower left on earth, and Tony Blair has to be seen not just shaking its hands, but making a splash. It gives kudos, but also presents Blair with a platform to extend his foreign-policy vision beyond Europe. Little will be left to chance on the three-day trip this

secretary and a veteran of Neil Kinnock's ill-fated 30-minute meeting with Ronald Reagan in 1988, will try to ensure the minimum number of "Blair smudged" headlines. It will be difficult. Such is the misplaced self-importance of the British, anything short of city-wide gridlock in honour of the Labour leader is likely to turn into a cruel snub to "Tony Who?" However, the Democrat administration will pull out the stops for Blair. They badly would like to see the back of John Major and Blair's pollster Philip Gould played some small part advising President Clinton's 1992 campaign. Both leaders have a communitarian philosophy that gives a special place to individual responsibility. Blairite-Brownite economics is clearly influenced by the work of the US Labour Secretary Robert Reich, who argues in an age of mobile

trans-national capital that the skills of your workforce and the quality of your national infrastructure are probably the two main assets a government can improve. Both economies are creating jobs, but cannot restore a sense of job security. Both parties are taking an interest in stakeholding as one means of restoring the feel-good factor. Blair will also feel comfortable with a Clinton once again pumping conservative themes such as the virtues of school uniforms, no leniency for teenage killers and support for V chips in television. In short, New Democrat will be meeting New Labour. The Blair staff are aware of Clinton's ambivalent image for Britons, and are as eager to point out the discrepancies as the similarities. The separation of powers between the Presidency and the Congress puts a constitutional roadblock in the way of Clinton that Tony Blair, assuming an

overall Commons majority, will not face. But that puts even more pressure on Blair to be clear-eyed if he wins power, his aides say. The Blair camp also argue that one of the biggest single errors made by the inexperienced Clinton team was to campaign on one issue and then to govern on another. Instead of making his first governing task the remaking of the welfare state — the election-trail promise — Clinton got lost in side-issues such as gays in the military, or too on the gigantic re-creating of the nation's health services. The health reforms collapsed in his government solutions, and the Republicans are "now promising to tie the welfare system round the President's neck and sink him with it." Blair will try to prevent the equivalent of a Republican backlash in Britain by not promising too much in his manifesto, but carrying it out in government. The Labour aims to make no policy pledges that cannot be funded by transferring resources from existing budgets. If Blair has learnt one lesson from Clinton before today, it is that you deliver best by promising little.

Beyond all sentiment

HE could almost be the Stealth candidate. Tony Blair's first trip to the White House is so far barely a dot on the outer rim of the American radar screen, generating much less attention than the now-regular visits by Gerry Adams. These have been a cornucopia of approving profiles in those increasingly rare magazines which contain words rather than pictures, like The New Yorker and The New Republic. Political junkies know his face from the C-SPAN channel's broadcast of Question Time, and inside the State Department they already see him as the prime-minister-in-waiting. In a handful of key places, Blair will get a friendly reception. The White House is putting out the welcome mat, and the Democratic

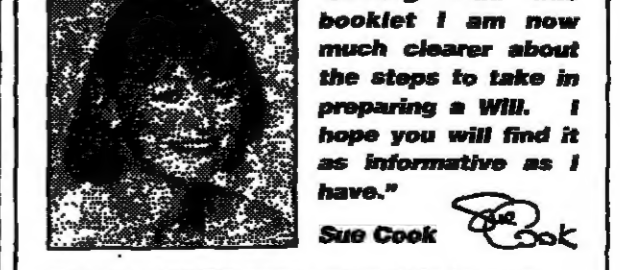
other pinko Labour peacenik. From a conventional point of view, this lack of attention is Blair's problem, a symbol of Britain's declining weight in world affairs. This Washington visit should be his opportunity, a way to show that while the old special relationship has crumbled in John Major's hands, it can be restored and modernised by Clinton and Blair. There is now a serious prospect that the rest of this decade could see two like-minded Oxford men, each one a lawyer and married to a lawyer, governing in tandem. They have a very great deal in common, from a readiness to talk of politics in terms of religion to a deliberate rejection of every ideological tradition of the

left, except for that old standby of party discipline which the Communists called "democratic centralism". Each man has imposed his own loyalists and a uniform message upon the party, even as each steers instinctively for the centre ground. In the misty future, they could be very useful allies. Both the Bush and Clinton administrations have said it often enough, that Britain's value to Washington will rise and fall with Britain's influence in Europe. And in that hard-headed place that lies beyond all sentiment, the White House sees Blair knocking their Trojan Horse into Europe far more skilfully than the exhausted John Major. But in the short term, each man has to win his election. And each one has reason to suspect that his cause might be just a bit tarnished by too much identification with the other. Beyond the obvious deli-

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Brian Abel-Smith

A religion of doing good

BRIAN Abel-Smith, who has died aged 69, first rose to prominence thanks to a memorandum to the 1963 Guillebaud inquiry into the costs of the National Health Service. Written with his mentor Richard Titmuss, whom he was eventually to succeed as professor of social administration at the London School of Economics, it showed that spending on the still infant NHS, far from spiralling out of control as the Treasury feared, was actually falling as a percentage of gross national product; and that the pressures of demography and advances in medical science meant that more needed to be spent on it, not less.

The memorandum set the tone of the eventual report; it removed any threat to the continued existence of the NHS, and instead firmly located it in the cross-party consensus.

During the 1950s, Abel-Smith continued his work on health policy in Britain, producing histories of pre-NHS hospitals and of the nursing profession that remain classics to this day. In the 1970s and 1980s, his interests became more international, with cross-national studies of value-for-money in health services and on the containment of health costs that are still essential reading. He visited more than 60 countries as a consultant for the World Health Organisation and other international organisations; in consequence, there is hardly a national health system in the developing world that does not bear the stamp of his advice.

But his contribution was not only to health services. He worked on various aspects of housing and social security policy; in particular, as special adviser on pensions to the then Secretary of State for Social Services, Richard Crossman, from 1968 to 1970, he contributed to what was probably the best work that the Labour Party ever produced on the subject.

The work of his that arguably made the most political impact was not on health, but on poverty. *The Poor and the Poorest*, written with Peter Townsend and published in 1965. By demonstrating that despite 20 years of a welfare

state, poverty still persisted, especially among children and the elderly, it challenged the social and political complacency of the day.

It led directly to the formation of the Child Poverty Action Group and, more broadly, to an awareness that a coalition of politically aware academics and welfare activists with a single cause to fight for could lead to change.

Indeed he was always active politically. He acted as a senior adviser to both the 1964-70 and 1974-79 Labour governments; he served as both the treasurer and vice-president of the Fabian Society. However, he never let his politics dominate his academic commitment to what he perceived to be the truth. One of his last acts was to co-author a controversial article in *Fabian News* that drew attention to some of the real achievements of the Conservative government's health reforms.

Abel-Smith was born in London, the son of a brigadier-general and educated at Haileybury College during the war. After post-war army service — he joined as a private in 1945, was commissioned in 1946 and served with the Allied Commission for Austria — he went up to Clare College, Cambridge, in 1948. It was from 1953 to 1955 as a research fellow with the National Institute of Economic and Social Research that he collected economic evidence for the Guillebaud Committee.

He was at the LSE from 1955 and spent most of his academic career in the department of social administration, becoming professor in 1961, a post he occupied until his official retirement in 1991. With Richard Titmuss, Abel-

Smith was the department's greatest star. Even after 1991 he was extraordinarily active in the school, still advising governments all over the world, but taking the time between his many trips to help set up a new and thriving research centre, LSE Health.

His energy was legendary. At times he seemed literally not to touch the ground. In one 12-hour period, he is reputed to have breakfasted in New York, lunched in Toronto and cooked dinner for six in London.

Despite his fame, he was both the treasurer and vice-president of the Fabian Society. However, he never let his politics dominate his academic commitment to what he perceived to be the truth. One of his last acts was to co-author a controversial article in *Fabian News* that drew attention to some of the real achievements of the Conservative government's health reforms.

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Brian Abel-Smith... demonstrating the permanence of poverty

by the figures." Abel-Smith was rather good with figures; a strength lacking in most Labour activists. His work on this front helped secure the health services from serious political mauling for more than half a century.

His other major academic impact was with Peter Townsend in rediscovering poverty. Their little book, *The Poor and the Poorest*, is as important a landmark in social politics of the post-war period as it is unreadable. Ironically, had the argument been presented in Townsend's outstanding prose it might have had far less influence. Such is the way of the world which never ceased to amuse the bedroom boy who excelled in his self-imposed role.

Professor Robert Pinker writes: Brian Abel-Smith, the outstanding scholar of his generation, was a worthy successor to Richard Titmuss in the field of social policy and administration. He was also my tutor when I was an LSE student in 1968. He was the best teacher I continued to be, a brilliant teacher and supervisor of doctoral students. He was unfailingly rigorous in his expectations and unfailingly generous in the support and help he gave.

I know of no one who matched the comparative range and technical depth of his understanding of the dynamics of social security and health care services. He was a convivial man, an accomplished gardener and an enthusiastic traveller — which was fortunate, given the constant demands for his services from overseas governments. He exemplified one of the distinctive traditions of the LSE: he loved in his dual commitment to the advancement of learning for its own sake and for the contribution it might make to the advancement of human welfare.

His students, like his friends, thought the world of him and those working in social policy and administration will miss him deeply.

Brian Abel-Smith, professor of social administration, born November 6, 1926; died April 4, 1996

There are few academics who have changed the world — and fewer who have changed it for the better. He was one

signed in 1946 and served with the Allied Commission for Austria — he went up to Clare College, Cambridge, in 1948. It was from 1953 to 1955 as a research fellow with the National Institute of Economic and Social Research that he collected economic evidence for the Guillebaud Committee.

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with his family background, gave him a natural confidence. I never once witnessed him behaving in a crabby manner. Nor did he ever feel it necessary to present other people's ideas as his own.

It was perhaps this security which helped make him such an outstanding political adviser and which was why secretaries of state wished for his services. And yet, while his loyalty to Labour could not be doubted, he retained a certain detachment. My first meeting with him was when the Child Poverty

action Group presented its pre-1970 Budget memorandum, a highly critical exposé of the Labour government's record towards the poor. Richard Crossman was the Secretary of State for Social Security and it was my first meeting with him. Crossman did everything except swing from the chandelier to upset the CPAG party. Abel-Smith found all this amusing and quipped when witty counter-blows were struck.

Above all, he knew what

the role of adviser was. It wasn't a stepping stone to office. It wasn't a form of escapism for the political career he decided not to pursue. It wasn't an opportunity to shine at his political master's expense. It was, above all, to bring talents which would help a radical government achieve its programme. Abel-Smith saw that this could best be achieved by acting as his master's second brain, operating free from the immediate pressures of a cabinet member. His intellectual ability, social poise and wide interests made him an

easy team player. The team player side of his character was to the fore in his academic work, too. On two fronts he helped change the debate. With Richard Titmuss, he countered the panic the Tories tried to induce over National Health Service costs. These two LSE academics were responsible for much of the analysis behind the Guillebaud report's conclusion that: "The widespread popular belief that there has been an increase of 'vast proportions' in both money cost and the real cost of the NHS is not borne out

by the figures." Abel-Smith was rather good with figures; a strength lacking in most Labour activists. His work on this front helped secure the health services from serious political mauling for more than half a century.

His other major academic impact was with Peter Townsend in rediscovering poverty. Their little book, *The Poor and the Poorest*, is as important a landmark in social politics of the post-war period as it is unreadable. Ironically, had the argument been presented in Townsend's outstanding prose it might have had far less influence. Such is the way of the world which never ceased to amuse the bedroom boy who excelled in his self-imposed role.

Lola Beltran

The voice of her nation

JUST occasionally a singer emerges whose career is a metaphor for a nation's identity, whose songs are markers for people's lives. Such a singer was Lola "la Grande" Beltran who has died in Mexico City at the estimated age of 67. "I have spent my life living and writing, loving and travelling with the voice of Lola Beltran close to me," confessed the Mexican writer, Carlos Fuentes two years ago, "on records, over the airwaves and above all, in the soundtrack of memory."

Fuentes spoke for millions. After lying in state in Mexico City's Palacio de Bellas Artes, la Grande was carried to her birthplace in the north-west mining town of Simolao.

Lola's rags to riches biography is the stuff of Latin American soap opera, and parallels the lives of her North American counterparts such as Tammy Wynette and Loretta Lynn. Lola's father, who was a mine manager, and her mother kept house. Through the latter's singing Lola developed her own passion for music; she sang for the Carmelite nuns at her school, and for friends — who charged

other people a cent apiece to hear that voice.

Lola was in her early twenties when, in 1953, her mother took her to Mexico City, Latin America's record and film-making capital, to get her into show business. Lola took a job as a secretary in the local radio station, XEW. It was a shrewd move; she came into contact with Mariachi Vargas, the station's resident musicians and the country's leading mariachi band.

Through them also she met the songwriter, Tomas Mendez, who was to present her with a catalogue of hits. Only after she appeared on the station's weekly talent contest did the band realise she had an exceptional voice. She was hired, a radio series followed as did the first of more than 90 records and she was to feature in around 50 musical films. Forty years later Beltran revealed that she still crossed herself in thanks to Lola's father.

La Grande's contralto voice was perfectly suited to the *ranchera* style, with which she became synonymous. She would be decked out in a polka-dot dress, flashing glistening rings, and pulling

the trademark shawl around her shoulders. Then, in exaggerated despair, backed by a vast mariachi band, she would slip from confidentiality and barely-sung whispers into long dramatically held notes, her voice suffused with tears. Her signature tune *Cu Curru Cu Cu Paloma* is an extraordinary example of her skill, complete with an imitation of a dove's cooing.

YET WITHIN a form which often slipped into self-caricature, Lola retained authenticity, avoiding excessive sentimentality and kitsch. *Ranchera* demands expressive-ness, and Lola had it in large quantities. Even in her earliest songs — still amongst the most poignant — she revealed a tremendous range.

La Grande's reputation spread beyond Mexico. The Tex-Mex country rock singer Linda Ronstadt paid her own tribute to Lola in her 1988 album, *Mas Canciones* which included a version of Tomas Mendez's hit for Beltran *Paloma de Ojos Verdes*. A decade earlier the young student

Pedro Almodovar was amongst the audience at a Spanish royal command performance by Beltran. Thus was her *Soy Feliz* (I Am Unhappy) to feature as the opening theme for his eighties movie, *Woman on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*.

Lola's last battle became a dramatic event, too. In mid-March her heart stopped for seven minutes before doctors could revive her. "I resisted death," she told her bull-fighter husband Alfredo Lallena as they sat by her bedside in the Hospital of the Angels. "I struggled with all my might. I will never forget those moments. Our Lord in his infinite mercy, gave me a little more time to live."

A week later, she died of a stroke. "Passion and desire, joy and risk," observed Carlos Fuentes, "and the cry for existence, are the wings of this dove that is the voice of our lady, Lola Beltran."



La Grande... the sound of 'passion and desire, joy and risk'

Letters

Paul J Jackson writes: Many listeners to *Round Britain Quiz* will have enjoyed the intellectual sense of humour of Gordon Clough (*Obituaries*, April 8). He set many of the questions and took great delight in tempting panelists with false trails and helping them out of cul-de-sacs with improvised assistance. He would then annoy a sizeable chunk of the letter-writing audience by awarding generous marks to the regional teams, so they could keep up with the London regulars of Irene Thomas and Eric Korn.

As the programme's producer, I enjoyed his skill in extracting information often against the clock — from contestants who did not know they knew the answers. The only time we had to scrap a question was when a Midlands team insisted they never watched television, and refused to identify the theme tune to *Dr Kildare*. He even enabled the Irish team to link the Pope to the Beatles, through a lengthy tract of Latin and the names John and Paul — necessary because they hadn't heard of the Fab Four. The only sadness was editing Gordon's coughs, sign of his worsening emphysema, out of the tapes.

Correction: Having divorced, Gordon Clough and his wife Carolyn remarried in 1994.

Birthdays

Severiano Ballesteros, golfer, 38; Jean-Paul Belmondo, actor, 63; Iain Duncan-Smith, Conservative MP, 42; Lord (Gerry) Fitt, 70; Hannah Gordon, actress, 55; Roger Harrison, chairman, Toyne Hall, 63; Hugh Hefner, Playboy publisher, 70; Tom Jackson, former postmen's leader, 71; Alan Knott, cricketer, 50; Thea Kitchner, songwriter, 65; Martin Margiela, fashion designer, 42; Peter Moores, director and heir, Littlewoods Pools, 64; Alex Moulton, bicycle designer, 76; The Rt Rev Gerald Moverley, Roman Catholic Bishop of Falkland, 74; Sara Parkin, environmentalist, 50; Carl Perkins, rock singer and guitarist, 64; Dennis Quaid, actor, 42; Ann Robinson, toxicologist, 63; Richard Rose, political scientist, 63; Valerie Singleton, broadcaster, 59.

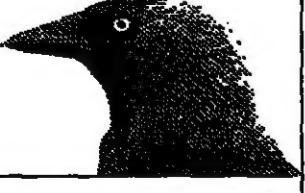
In Memoriam

RUMOLD, Michael Douglas, 37, 07/04/58/04/96. "His laughter was better than the best in the morning."

Engagements

ANN HOPE MORRISON and **GEORGEY ROBERT WILSON**. Announcement of engagement of Ann Hope Morrison daughter of Mrs M & Mrs J Morrison to Georgey Robert Wilson, son of the late Mr & Mrs J Wilson. Both at 11, Victoria St. To place your announcement telephone 0171 713 4267. Fax 0171 713 4129.

Jackdaw



Out of the blue

EVEN THE seemingly harmless assumption that an "average" number of asteroids strikes the Earth each year may be misleading. Consider the word "average" carefully. For example, the death toll from natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, droughts, floods and landslides is dominated by the very largest of these events. In a typical century these terrestrial horrors will have a much larger body count than the asteroid impacts.

But there is one major difference between the two classes of holocaust. Terres-

trial disasters are limited in their size. Floods, for example, usually affect only a single river system. The nature of crustal fault systems means that earthquakes larger than 10 on the Richter scale cannot occur. With extraterrestrial hazards, there are no limits. They can devastate the whole globe. The "average" of 2,450 deaths a year (due to impacting objects) could mean that no one dies for 9,999 years, and then 24.5 million people perish the next.

Can something be done about the asteroids that are on a collision course with Earth? Here we encounter a host of problems. First, find your asteroid. Astronomers estimate that more than 2,000 bodies larger than a kilometre across traverse the Earth's orbit each year. Reduce the search size to 0.25 kilometres and the number leaps to 200,000. Each of these 250-metre impactors would produce a more powerful explosion — greater than a billion tonnes of TNT.

David Hughes looks up to the skies in his review of *Rain Of*

Iron And Ice by John Lewis (Addison-Wesley) in the *New Scientist*.

Underground
EYELASS, faceless, legless tube —
O worm, you're not much imbued;
Yet, living drainpipe, burrowing ground,
Digesting earth and making mounds.
You plough, serate, and slowly harrow.
To help us grow sweet peas and marrows.

Heartless, though, you can't be called.
As you've got five of these, I'm told;
Drying out is your pet hate
Because you have to estivate!

And those who think when you're chopped in two;
There'll be twice as many of you,
Are WRONG. That's not your feature,
You're a complex, warm and lovely creature.

And although you don't seem to have much sense, In the soil you're very dense!
I know you've really got a brain (or "ganglion"), you're arseal brain "drain".
I'll finish now and say adieu (Charles Darwin wrote a better eulogy but this will do).
We'll give you lots of humus to chew, Just count on us, we count on YOU!
Jose Warrander's Ode To The Worm, presented in this month's Community Recycling News. Thanks to Mike Thornon.

Colour blind
THE FIRST girl I fell in love with was a blue-eyed blonde, and for a period of three or four years I only went out with white girls. Now, for the past two years, I have only dated black girls... I met my current girlfriend at a friend's place. It all happened in a very natural way... I didn't consider, or even give a thought to the fact that she

was black... The main problem we experience is having to deal with society and its hypocrisy. The worst is coming back from the cinema at 11pm and running into older guys in suits who are making their way home from the pub. I find that when the older generation gets drunk, the worst racist stereotypes about middle England come out and nothing can keep their mouths shut. These older white guys are unbearable, but not as bad as the black guys who walk up to my girlfriend and find any excuse to start a conversation where they can call her "sister".
This happens almost daily in Britain where we live... Some go as far as saying to her, just as I stand there next to her, "Why are you going out with this white oppressor?" This is so hypocritical, especially when I consider that a lot of my black friends boast about being down with their sisters, but will seize the first opportunity to go with the frocked redhead in the fish-n-chip shop... I also

have to admit that I see a lot of my white friends treating their black girlfriends like sex objects or prostitutes, because of this black sexuality myth. It has taken a while, but I now feel comfortable with my position in society as a white, Jewish B-boy, who happens to be attracted to a race that doesn't always accept me for who I am.
The urban music and style mag True looks at interracial relationships in this extract from one of its interviews.

No cracks
1. DO YOU ever use more lip balm than you planned?
2. HAS THE use of lip balm interfered with your job?
3. IS YOUR lip balm use causing conflict with your spouse or family?
4. DO YOU feel depressed, guilty, or remorseful after you use lip balm?
5. HAVE YOU ever lied to or misled those around you about how much or how often you use?
6. DO YOU ever wish that you had never taken that first application or hit of lip balm?
7. DO YOU use lip balm in your car, at work, in the bathroom, on airplanes, or other public places?
8. ARE YOU experiencing financial difficulties due to your lip balm use?
9. DO YOU experience an anticipation high just knowing you are about to use lip balm?
10. WITHOUT using lip balm, do you have difficulty sleeping without taking a drink or another drug?

True
SOUL/SOUL
V.I.P. 1980-1996

11. ARE YOU absorbed with the thought of getting coated even while interacting with a friend or loved one?
12. HAVE YOU begun to use lip balm while alone?
13. HAVE ANY of your friends or family suggested that you may have a problem?
14. HAVE YOU tried to quit or cut down on your lip balm use only to find that you couldn't?
15. DO YOU ever have feelings that people are talking about you or watching you?
From the Self-Test for Lip Balm Addiction on the Lip Balm Anonymous homepage on the Internet. <http://user.soul.com/LipBalm41>
Tomorrow, the pain, the suffering, the love and hugs of addiction as Lip Balm junkies tell their stories.
Jackdaw wants your jeeps. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713-4866; write Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Dan Glaister

صوتك من الامل

Campaign against fat cats heats up, this page
Children do save pocket money, this page

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

London braced for shares turmoil as Dow plummets

Roger Cowe
FEARS of an end to UK interest rate cuts are expected to lead to a plunge in share prices today following a weekend of turmoil in American financial markets.

One US fund manager said: "It's a blood-bath, but one that was very much expected after Friday's employment data and the subsequent reaction in the bond market."

Prices in the bond markets also continued the fall which began on Friday, as fears that stronger-than-expected economic growth could lead to higher inflation and an early rise in interest rates.

Meeting of the policy-setting Open Market Committee is scheduled for May 21. Economists still expect rates to fall on the Committee, but a halt to the downward trend in the US, let alone any increase, would make it much more difficult for British rates to come down again.

In a report published today, however, economists at HSBC Greenwell predict that UK rates will end the year at 5 per cent, down from 6 per cent now. They argue that the rise in UK unemployment this year heralds a new attack on jobs in manufacturing.

"Manufacturers could be on the verge of a serious bout of job-shedding," they say. "Consumption will rise this year, but there will be no boom and the rise on spending will not alone be enough to keep manufacturing afloat. The danger must now be that the stock clear-out in manufacturing becomes a new recession."

American Notebook

Little reason for growth phobia



Mark Tran

DESPITE yesterday's turbulence on Wall Street, Federal Reserve will leave interest rates alone at its next policy meeting at the end of May.

To the surprise of the US financial markets, 140,000 jobs were created in March, about twice general expectations. That came on top of the 624,000 new jobs in February, down from the initial estimate of 705,000 but still a hefty number.

The bond market took fright at the March jobs figures as the benchmark 30-year treasury bond rose almost two points, sending long-term rates to their highest level since August, at 6.92 per cent. Some Wall Street economists now think that the economy is growing too fast. So expectations of Fed easing are giving way to an anticipation of monetary tightening later in the year.

The hand-wringing in the bond market underlines the new conventional wisdom that growth above 2.5 per cent will ignite inflation. The Clinton administration has adopted this low-growth mind-set, although the President at times whinges about the Fed's meagre target.

Whatever chance Mr Clinton had to shift the terms of debate at the Fed flew out the window when New York investment banker Felix Rohatyn withdrew his name for Fed vice-chairman, under a concerted Republican assault.

Mr Rohatyn has long argued that the economy can and must grow more quickly to deal with the critical issues confronting the US: taming the budget deficit, getting to grips with social problems and achieving a higher standard of living.

Corporate chiefs in the US feel that better use of technology has made workers more productive and chafes at the growth straitjacket imposed by the Fed, arguing that the economy should get back to the 3 per cent-plus growth rates of the 1970s. In the 1960s, GDP growth was even perky at an average 4 per cent.

Labour hits at fat cats 'collusion'

Richard Thomas

LABOUR will step up its campaign against "fat cats" this week, ahead of a Stock Exchange bid to block proposals for full disclosure of the cost of company directors' pension payments.

Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, will accuse the Government and big business of colluding to dilute last year's recommendation from the Greenbury committee that the full capital costs of executive pensions be detailed in company reports.

A Stock Exchange response to the Greenbury proposals, expected later this week, is thought to reject full disclosure in favour of a watered-down measure of pension values.

The exchange is falling into line with the Confederation of British Industry which - fearful of adverse public reaction to the huge sums involved - has mounted an effective behind-the-scenes campaign against full disclosure.

A paper prepared in secret for Mr Brown by a prominent pensions expert shows that the 1994 pay rise awarded to Cedric Brown, the chief executive of British Gas, would have been even more explosive if the effect on his pension had been included.

"We will be pressing for full disclosure of the cost to companies of providing these pensions. Meanwhile, the Government, which promised at the time of the Greenbury report to introduce legislation, if necessary, is trying to water it down."

Government hopes that Stock Exchange listing rules could be used in place of legislation to bring about reform had been resisted, he said.

In the latest round of the squabble, the Faculty of Actuaries and Institute of Actuaries (FIA) delivered a report to the Stock Exchange, setting out the options for disclosure.

The exchange is likely to call for a half-way house, which costs pensions on an "accruals" basis. The FIA is now thought, also to favour this system, after retreating from its earlier insistence on full-cost calculations.

The accruals scheme even out pension payments over a whole term of office, and is based on the amount a retired director will receive each year. The Greenbury suggestion is the "transfer value" approach - the amount of capital a firm has to put aside to meet the bills or to move the pension to another firm.

On an accruals basis, Cedric Brown's pension would have increased from £180,000 to £316,000 in 1994, according to Labour's paper.

Red Rose Economics

Workers put a stake up for sale

Richard Thomas continues the week's series testing out Labour's policies

STAKEHOLDING, Labour's new "big idea", is said to have been inspired by FI Group. "We've never called ourselves a stakeholding company," says chief executive Hilary Cropper. "Maybe we don't need to - we just do it."

Since the information technology company was established in 1983 by East European emigrant Steve Shirley, it has done everything New Labour wants: consultative committees, a community affairs manager, participative decision-making and - since 1991 - employee share ownership.

Over half the equity is owned by the 1,500 workers. According to Ms Cropper, who orchestrated the employee buy-out, the fusing of personal with corporate interest has been the driving force behind last year's 57 per cent increase in pre-tax profits.

But tomorrow, FI faces the biggest test in its history, when public trading in its shares begins. Ms Shirley, the founder, is unhappy with the move, fearing that the ethos of partnership will be eroded.

Staff, while supporting the change, are also nervous. Lis Barlow Jones, an employee for 10 years, says: "It is a bit of a gamble. The biggest fear is that we will be taken over."



Chief executive Hilary Cropper says City institutions favour FI's employee shareowners

tion: it is company managers who need to back up. Labour's strategy for corporate stakeholding is certainly based as much on exhortation as on legislation - although the adoption of the EC directive on works councils, and heated-up shareholder powers are on the agenda.

Last night, shadow chancellor Gordon Brown said it was wrong to impose across-the-board solutions. "The purpose is to give workers more opportunity to participate in the decisions that affect the company. But this can take many different forms," he said. "Worker-directors, for example, may be fine in one place, but not the answer elsewhere."

But Ms Cropper says government could do more to encourage wider share ownership in the firms people work for. One suggestion is to make gains from own-company shares exempt from capital gains tax.

Although this is unlikely to be taken up, Labour's plans to offer a lower rate of CGT for people who hold shares for a long period would have a similar effect.

Even with additional incentives, Ms Cropper admits that a rush towards employee share ownership is unlikely, partly because of poor management - but also because many workers cannot afford to defer part of their income into shares. FI stuffed full of highly paid graduates, is scarcely typical.

Many Labour front-benchers argue that tackling unemployment, low pay and poor skills are more important than fiddling with corporate tax codes and board membership. It is hard to be a stakeholder without a job.

Only the state can deliver the goods here - the notion of companies acting as agents of social change in their local communities is a pipe dream, as Ms Cropper makes plain.

"To talk about the community as a stakeholder is just daft," she says. "Companies are there to create wealth."

The FI view of stakeholding is uncompromising: it works because of a high degree of overlap between workers and owners. It is not a dressed-up social policy but a demonstrably competitive strategy, which - after tomorrow - will thrive even on the roller-coaster of the financial markets.

Pocket money soars by 17pc

Children spend most on sweets, but save more, writes Cliff Jones

CHILDREN have never had it so good, according to a report published today. Pocket money stands at £2.40 a week on average, 17 per cent more than last year, according to a survey by Birds Eye Walls.

Children in Scotland fared best, with £2.97 per week. The worst off lived in the Midlands with only £2.15. New teenagers felt the pinch more than other age groups. Young people aged 11 to 13 received the smallest pocket money income: their average weekly pay increased by only 3 per cent to £2.73. Those in the 14-16 year age bracket, were paid 11 per cent more, £4.40 on average.

they are underworked. A survey of 600 young people, conducted last year by TSB, revealed that almost 90 per cent of them believed that they could work harder for their money. Most agreed that they have it easier than their parents did when they were young.

Despite the changes in earnings since last year, spending habits were unchanged. Most money was spent on ice cream and sweets, with magazines coming second and music third. More young people were saving for the future. Wall's found that the number of children saving had reached the highest level in the survey's 22-year history.

The finding echoes a similar study from the Alliance & Leicester which revealed that nine out of ten people aged 11 to 17 had a savings account.



Rentokil chief £4m richer after cashing in on share options

Roger Cowe

RENTOKIL's chief executive, Clive Thompson, who will decide this week whether to increase his bid for business services rival BET, made more than £4 million from share options last year.

Mr Thompson, who has successfully pursued a target of 30 per cent increases in earnings per share each year, also saw his pay rise by more than £100,000 last year because of a higher bonus pay-out. Mr Thompson received a basic salary of £400,000 and a bonus of £320,000, up from £276,000 last year.

With other benefits, his total pay reached £657,000, 15 per cent higher than in 1994. In a message to shareholders with the annual report, he said BET had run out of arguments to support its bid.

The post-holiday spotlight picks out Irish paper firm

This week Tony May

FEW companies time their results to coincide with a holiday period, so Jefferson Smurfit, the Irish paper and packaging group, will have the spotlight pretty much to itself.

Amec will be closely quizzed on prospects in case it did not deserve to escape the clutches of Kvaerner of Norway earlier this year. The group has lined up a series of disposals to raise £150 million and help boost shareholder value.

Profits should be up from last year's £20 million to £22.9 million.

Sellers of electrical goods facing two investigations for price of one

Roger Cowe

THE market for electrical goods is coming under renewed scrutiny by competition authorities as the Monopolies Commission investigates the suppliers' power and the Office of Fair Trading focuses on product warranties.

Warranties can add up to 15 percentage points to gross profit margins of electrical retailers such as Dixons, according to retail market analysts Verdict Research, which says they remain a target of the Office of Fair Trading.

Verdict believes that further action is inevitable. It is not clear how the regulators can intervene directly to force shops to lower the cost of policies, but one solution could be competitive action by banks and other financial institutions. Midland Bank's direct sales operation, First Direct, is considering offering extended warranties on electrical goods, and other financial services businesses are believed to be eyeing the market.

Any attack on warranty profits could be disastrous for retailers, whose product profit margins are extremely thin. Sales have been buoyant recently, with a 10 per cent increase of 11 per cent last year. But prices remain remarkably stable from store to store. The Monopolies Commission is therefore investigating the links between retailers and the handful of global suppliers who produce the majority of electrical goods.

Quebec saviour tested by cuts

RAC

Racing

Jodami finds Gale too strong

Chris Hawkins sees British runners fill minor places in Irish National

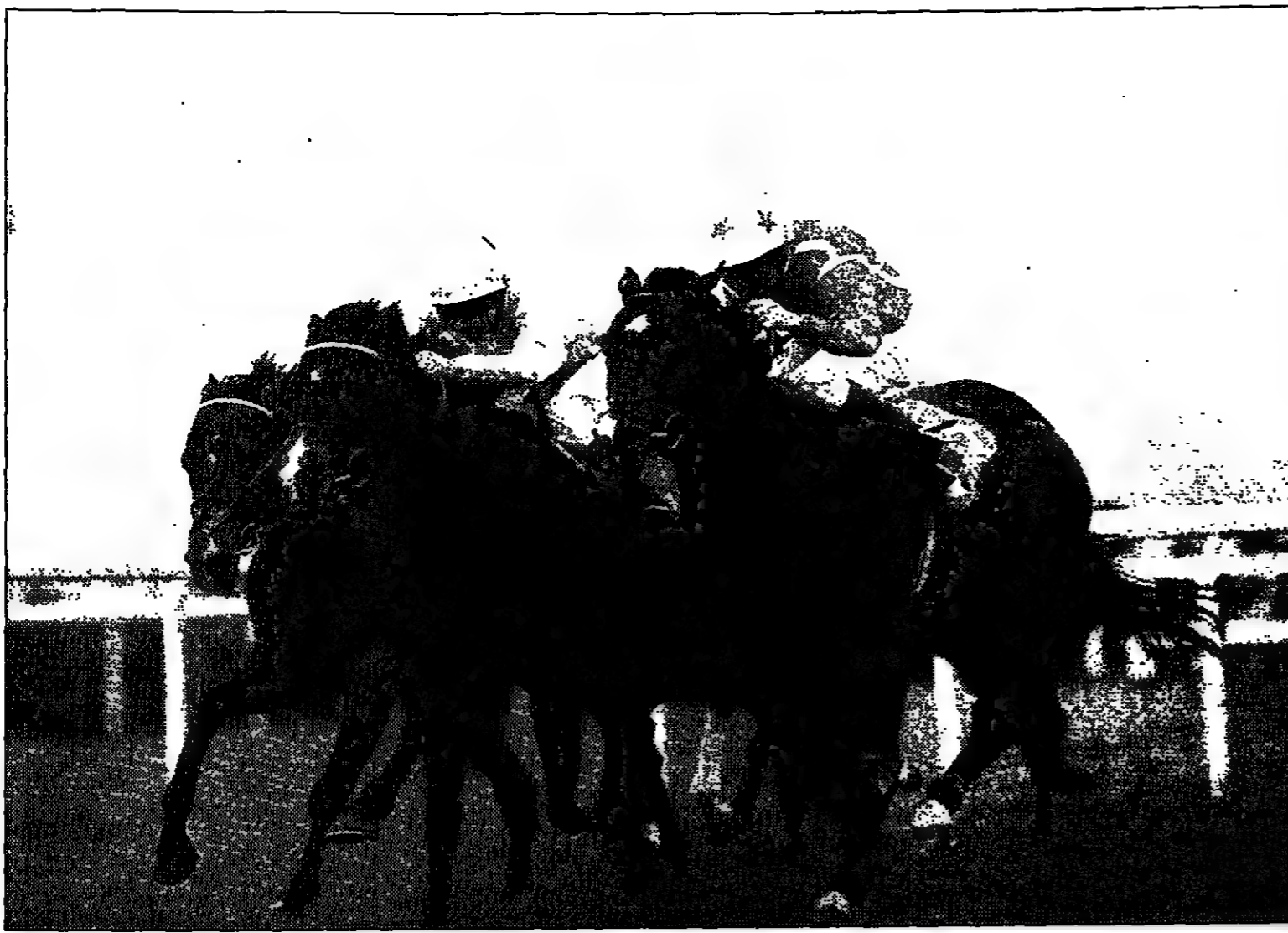
FATHERED GALE won the Jameson Irish Grand National by eight lengths from the English challenger Jodami yesterday but the bare result gives little indication of what a thrilling race this was.

Cool Dawn, trained in Somerset by Robert Alner, had set a furious pace and was still in front turning for home but Jodami, Go Go Gallant and Feathered Gale were snapping at his heels in hot pursuit.

With two to go, Jodami, if asked to name the winner, most spectators would no doubt have plumped for Jodami, with his ears pricked and on whom Mark Dwyer had not moved a muscle.

But those who know this horse well would have been far less confident and sure enough he flattered to deceive, finding disappointingly little when let down approaching the last.

In telling contrast, however, Feathered Gale had been the first to come under pressure and Franny Woods began to rouse him after the third last. The



Star show... Regal Archive, right, takes the Stark Maiden Stakes under a confident ride from John Reid at Kempton yesterday

more Woods asked for the gelding he got and the gelding, who loves fast ground, ran out a totally convincing winner.

Grand National like my late father Dan, who succeeded with Tied Cottage in 1979.

One would have thought the stronger handling would have made a difference but Cool Dawn seemed just too full of himself.

Miss Harding has been criticised in the past for being "a mere passenger" on Cool Dawn but O'Dwyer hardly gave the impression of being in charge.

Go Go Gallant faded in the final quarter mile to finish fourth, his jumping tending to fall apart as Charlie Swan asked for everything but the fast ground was probably against this seven-year-old.

Southwell all-weather Flat meeting

Table listing race details for Southwell all-weather Flat meeting, including race numbers, names, and times.

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Uttoxeter jumping card

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Wetherby National Hunt programme

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Cochrane pips Eddery twice for a double

RAY COCHRANE got his timing right with a vengeance at Kempton Park yesterday when swooping late to snatch the Westminister Tax Insurance Rosbery Handicap on Hazard A Guess, writes Chris Hawkins.

Pat Eddery seemed to have the prize within his grasp for the second year running on Special Dawn, but no horse has ever done the double in this race and Hazard A Guess foiled his gallant effort in the final strides.

Trainer David Nicholls, famous as a jockey for his association with that wonderful sprinter Soba, bought the winner out of Lynda Ramsden's stable two months ago and sweetened the six-year-old gelding with a run in a 'ladies' race at Doncaster on the opening day of the season.

"He's been working really well lately and was not unfancied," said Nicholls of his 10-1 winner, Jan Blakey, his owner, was coming but rang me this morning to say he'd had a glass of wine too many last night and would be watching on television.

Cochrane was in devastating form and struck again in similar style when getting the old campaigner Hard To Figure up to beat Eddery and Easy Dollar in the Quail Stakes.

This was the ten-year-old's 98th race and 14th victory but he will not be resting on his laurels because Ron Hodges, his trainer, intends to have him out again next week in the Abernant Stakes at Newmarket.

Henry Cecil got off the mark for the season when Magnificent Style, ridden by Willie Ryan, lived up to her name in the City Industrial Supplies Maiden Stakes winning by six lengths on her debut.

Cecil commented: "I didn't really fancy her that much and a place was the best I was hoping for."

He has a strong hand of three-year-old fillies, however, and expects to reintroduce his 1,000 Guineas favourite Bosra Sham in the Fred Darling Stakes at Newbury next week.

Another Newmarket trainer registering his first success was Luca Cumani whose Lucky Di streaked home in the Magnolia Stakes in the hands of Frankie Dettori.

Regal Archive rewarded favourite backers in the first division of the Stark Maiden Stakes although it was not until well inside the final furlong that John Reid brought him on the scene.

Peter Chapple-Hyam, the colt's trainer, will aim him for the Italian Guineas, having saddled Prince Arthur to win that Classic last season.

Incredibly, there is no Flat racing today except on the all-weather at Southwell where Jareeb (2.50) looks one of the best bets.

He flopped on the turf at Folkestone last time but is a different proposition on dirt on which he has won eight times.

The nap is Dream End (3.40) in the Douglas Concrete Handicap Hurdle at Uttoxeter. A spring horse who likes fast ground, he ran well when second to Flying Instructor at Ascot last week and seems to have less to do here.

Results

Table listing race results for various events, including race numbers, names, and winners.

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Rugby Union

David Plummer finds the RFU in danger of being kicked out of the Five Nations if it does not accept equal shares of television money

England put on TV spot

ENGLAND will today be asked to accept a 10-year agreement guaranteeing the four home unions equal shares of the money generated from the Five Nations Championship television contract or face expulsion from the competition and to be replaced by Italy.

The Five Nations committee gathered in London with feelings again running high over the issue of television money. The Scottish, Welsh and Irish unions have united against the Rugby Football Union which has indicated it wants a 60 per cent cut from the new contract starting in the 1997-98 season.

over three years. Its value is estimated to have risen three-fold since 1994, a figure which would be inflated considerably if satellite or cable television became involved.

Zealand and Australia regularly on a home-and-away basis. The other three home unions, with the backing of France, are taking a determined stand but their bargaining positions would be appreciably weaker were England removed from their fixtures.

England have made overtures to Wales to join them in a breakaway but have been rebuffed by them, leaving Welsh nationalism to stand alone.

England made overtures to Wales to join them in a breakaway but have been rebuffed by them, leaving Welsh nationalism to stand alone.

Heineken League

A'von 13, Cardiff 41

Davies strikes it richer

David Plummer

ADRIAN DAVIES guided Cardiff to maximum bonus points to renew their challenge to the leaders Neath, even though the former Wales fly-half is in his last season with the club before joining Richmond along with his half-back colleague Andy Moore.

"I am a Cardiff player at the moment but I have had to make a decision about my future," he said. "Like all the other players at the Arms Park, my priority is holding on to the championship."

The Cardiff coach Terry Holmes is resigned to losing Davies. "The London clubs and Newcastle have money to throw around and it is a players' market. I have told Cardiff that if I am still in charge next season, I want Adrian as my outside half but if it comes down to money, we are in no position to compete."



Revolving YoYo... Rick Rydell's car spins off the track on the opening lap of the first race at Donington Park yesterday, taking David Leslie's Honda, right, with it. This and the day's other round of the Auto Trader RAC Touring Car Championship were won by the Touring Car World Cup champion Frank Biela. It was his first outing in an Audi, whose four-wheel-drive traction gave him a distinct advantage over his two-wheel-drive rivals yesterday. The former British champion Will Hoy, driving a Williams-run Renault Laguna, was second in both races

Alesi geared up to challenge Hill

Alan Henry finds Benetton in bullish mood and impressed by their new man's discipline as the Formula One circus heads for Europe

BENETTON's team chief Flavio Briatore is already talking bets that Jean Alesi will beat Damon Hill to the world title despite the British driver consolidating his lead with another dominant victory in Sunday's Grand Prix of Argentina.

is also competitive in our car. He was running second in the closing stages.

bourne the two South American grands prix saw the Ferraris reacting violently to the bumps of Interlagos and Buenos Aires, and there is talk of a possible aerodynamic redesign in the next few months.

MP4/11 has delivered less by far than was expected, have problems. They will be at Silverstone later this week mounting a renewed attempt to resolve the handling imbalance that caused David Coulthard to slip back to seventh place in the closing stages in Buenos Aires.

Table Tennis

Champions upset at start of historic tour

THE inaugural professional tour opened with three upsets at Kettering yesterday, writes Richard Jago.

Cricket

Bombay betting ring broken

INDIAN police have arrested five people and broken up an illegal betting ring linked to international matches, including the World Cup.

Sailing

Merricks on song for Atlanta

JOHN MERRICKS and Ian Walker, Britain's representatives in the 470-class at the Olympics, yesterday scored a magnificent victory at Palma in the four-day Olympic class regatta.

Snooker

Bond breaks in at last gasp

NIGEL BOND, the world No. 13 who had won only one match in six previous tournaments, came back from the brink of defeat yesterday to win his first world-ranking title.

Hockey

Cullen rounds off with gold

HIGHTOWN, so close to a European title so often, finally came away with a gold in the European Cup Winners' Cup at Rotterdam yesterday by beating the German club Berliner 2-1 in the final.

Football

Spain's Jordi Calafat, with his new crew Kiko Sanchez, 'It's always good to win but especially good to beat Jordi Calafat on his home waters,' said Merricks.

MARKET QUAN...
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LLOYD'S...

HUNTINGDON...
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SOUTHWELL 103/203
IRISH 120/200

Rugby League

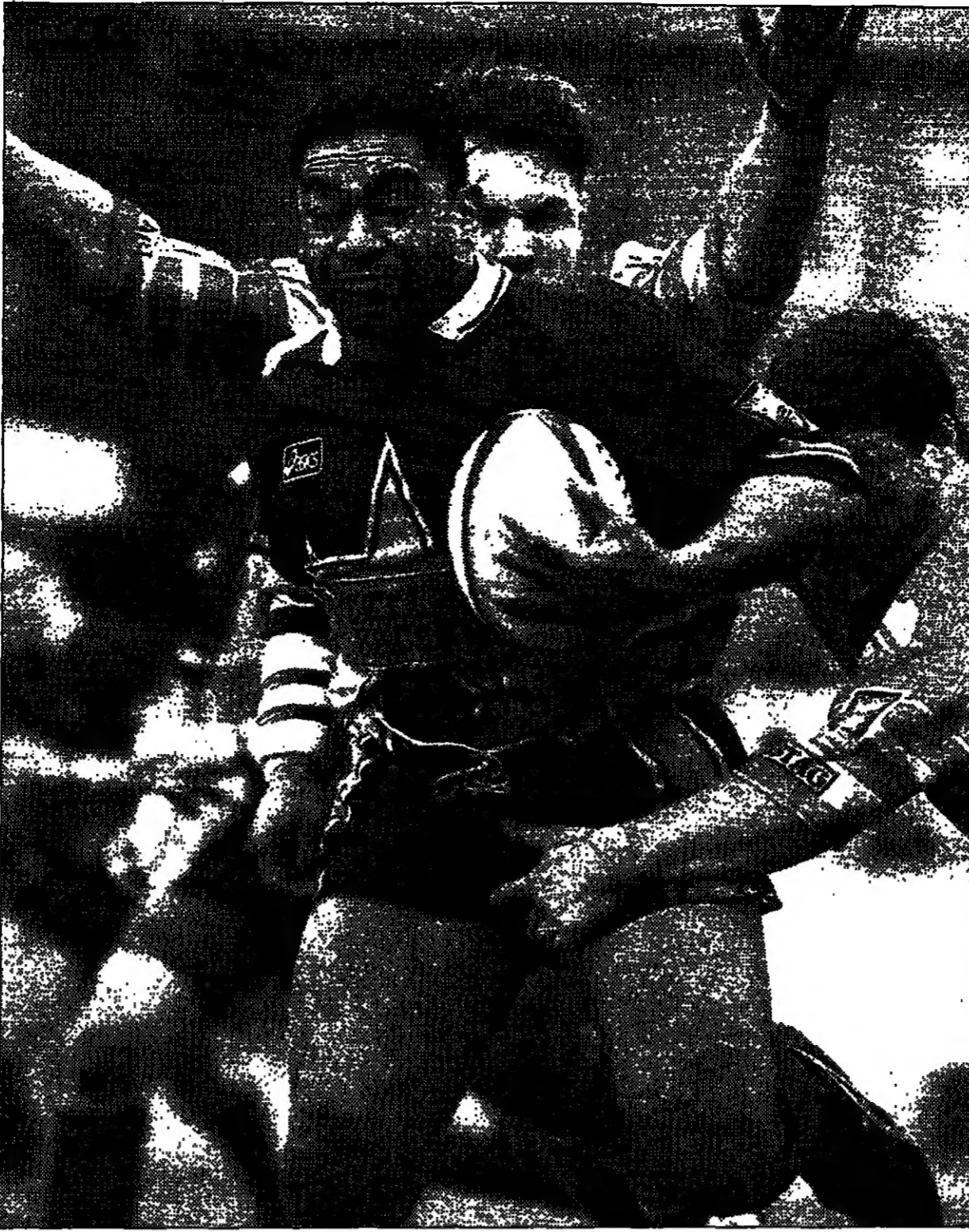
Super League: Leeds 24, St Helens 46

Saints look wholly new

Paul Fitzpatrick

ST HELENS are in their best shape for some time and Shaun McRae can take much of the credit. He instilled a talented squad when he arrived from Canberra last January but their performances now reflect his personality and no longer that of the sacked Eric Hughes. Their Challenge Cup final against Bradford Bulls on April 27 appears to be acting more as an incentive than a distraction. To beat Wigan after falling 16-4 behind was some feat and to follow less than 72 hours later with this win at Leeds suggests the stuff of champions. A pack of real force is developing. There are few better props, hookers or second-row forwards anywhere than Apollo Perelli, Neil Cunningham and Chris Joynt. The Australian Derek McVey is a discovery and Andy Northey is clearly relishing the switch from the back division to loose forward.

They are badly needed, although for 80 minutes Leeds produced possibly their most committed performance since they removed Halifax from the Challenge Cup in late February. Not even the loss of their captain Neil Harrison, taken to hospital for neck X-rays, could weaken their resolve. They changed ends with a deficit of only six points, which became two when Cunningham scored his second try three minutes after the interval, but in the 48th minute Saints took a grip. Arnold set off inside his own half and ran 70 metres for a superb individual try. The floodgates then opened with tries for Newlove and Cunningham, deserved reward for two outstanding players, and a second touchdown in as many games for Tommy Martyn, easing his way back after 11 months absence. The floodgates then opened with tries for Newlove and Cunningham, deserved reward for two outstanding players, and a second touchdown in as many games for Tommy Martyn, easing his way back after 11 months absence. The floodgates then opened with tries for Newlove and Cunningham, deserved reward for two outstanding players, and a second touchdown in as many games for Tommy Martyn, easing his way back after 11 months absence.



No escape... home advantage counts for nothing as St Helens defenders halt George Mann of Leeds

Golf

Montgomerie and Woosnam turn to guru

David Davies in Atlanta on two men in need of a trim for the Masters

THE glorious triumph by Paul Stankowski at the BellSouth Classic in Atlanta on Sunday - glorious for him at least - further emphasised the feeble performances by some of the game's top players. Stankowski, who started the week as sixth reserve for the event, produced a final round of 71 for an eight-under-par total of 290, then in a sudden-death play-off against Brandel Chamblee. While these two from the nether regions of US golf were winning \$234,000 and \$140,000 respectively, our brave boys Ian Woosnam and Colin Montgomerie were playing nondescript golf. It was a sunny day, the greens, well rained upon on Saturday, were receptive and the pin positions were no more difficult than any other Sunday. But the recognised players, almost to a man, played as if their minds were elsewhere which, given that this week is Masters week, may be understandable but is hardly good news. Montgomerie and Woosnam both had rounds of 73; Fred Couples, winner last week of the Players Championship, had a 73 too; and Nick Price, the best player of the past few years, had a 71. Stankowski, who got off to a fast start, was rarely pressured, certainly not by a name he feared, and in the play-off he hit fewer bad shots than Chamblee. In fact Stankowski's bad one was a blessing in disguise, for it was his tee shot and it meant that he had to lay up short at the first play-off hole, the long 18th. Chamblee then attempted to find the green with an iron second off a hanging lie and instead dumped it in the greenside lake. His fourth found the fringe and his fifth, putted, missed. All Stankowski now had to do was get down in two from 10 feet and he holed the first. Woosnam converted to victory with a burst of five tries in the final 17 minutes from Bright Sodje, Ryan Sheridan, Mick Cook, Anthony Farrell and Andy Hay. Workington had been in contention for an hour but about three months that world has been anything but super and they are still without a win after being

No Entat cordial as Bears draw little comfort in Paris

OLDHAM BEARS were within minutes of making a significant capital gain in Paris but had to settle for a share of the points when a late try by the winger Pascal Bomat, after Paul Ateschon had failed to deal with Patrick Entat's kick through, was converted by the hooker Patrick Torralles. The 24-24 draw maintained Paris's unbeaten home record in the Super

League and meant that both sides have now taken three points from three away games. Entat's tactical kicking and eye for an opening were consistently troublesome to Oldham, keeping Paris in touch when the visitors looked like racing away with the game. Bears had taken control after two tries just before half-time after they had fallen behind to a fine try

from the French Test full-back Laurent Lucchese. It was Oldham's captain, Martin Crompton, who sparked Oldham into life when he danced through the Paris defence to put the Australian forward Matt Munro over for his first try in Europe. Although Francis Malone missed the conversion, he extended the lead with a 35th-minute penalty and then added the goal after Darren Abram had sidestepped to the line. Six minutes into the second half Malone broke down the blind side following a scrum to claim Oldham's third try. Entat then chipped through for the second-row Didier Cabestany to score, only for Oldham to regain the initiative when the team's other Australian, Andrew Patmore, touched down.

Sport in brief

Rugby

Frano Botica, the dual All Black and Kiwi International, will play union with Orrell next season after signing a £40,000 two-year deal with the League One club yesterday. Castledare have given the 32-year-old back, now fully recovered from a broken leg, permission to switch codes during the Super League close season next winter. "I'm glad it's all sorted out," Botica said. "I can now put thoughts of Orrell to one side and concentrate on helping Castledare continue a good start to the season."

Olympic Games

Nagano has backed down on one of its election promises. The organisers of the 1998 Winter Olympics have gained the consent of the International Olympic Committee to withdraw a pledge to pay the travel expenses of all competitors and officials, an offer that helped win the vote to host the Games. Instead competitors will be reimbursed with \$1,000 each. "I think the deal shows that the IOC appreciates our financial circumstances," said the Nagano Olympic Committee director General Makoto Kobayashi. About 1,700 foreign competitors are expected in Nagano. The Japanese city won the

Results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

Table with columns for teams and scores. Includes matches like Tottenham 1-0 Southampton, Arsenal 4-1 Chelsea, etc.

Tennis

India's first ATP tournament earlier than scheduled yesterday because lighting on the two side courts was faulty. Jakob Hlasek then extinguished Chris Wilkinson 6-3, 7-5. Hlasek, a Swiss ranked No. 42 in the world, needed only one hour and six minutes to beat Wilkinson, ranked No. 127, in the Indian Open, overpowering the Englishman with five aces and strong net play.

Pools Forecast

Table listing various sports events and forecasts, including FA Carling Premiership, Scottish League, and other regional competitions.

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE

Table with columns for teams and scores for the Endsleigh League First Division.

Second Division

Table with columns for teams and scores for the Endsleigh League Second Division.

Third Division

Table with columns for teams and scores for the Endsleigh League Third Division.

Fourth Division

Table with columns for teams and scores for the Endsleigh League Fourth Division.

Wales

Table with columns for teams and scores for the Wales League.

Yorkshire

Table with columns for teams and scores for the Yorkshire League.

North East

Table with columns for teams and scores for the North East League.

North West

Table with columns for teams and scores for the North West League.

Football

Table listing various football matches and results from different leagues.

Baseball

Table listing various baseball games and scores.

Hockey

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Bond triumphant in final frame, page 13
Manchester City flirt with danger, page 14

England isolated in Five Nations talks, page 13
Leeds suffer third Super League defeat, page 15

SportsGuardian

PROFLIGATE UNITED KEEP PREMIERSHIP HOPES HIGH AT OLD TRAFFORD

Premiership: Manchester United 1, Coventry City 0

Cantona steps up the pace

David Lacey

MANCHESTER United's pursuit of a third Premier League title in four seasons continues to be coupled with the name of Eric Cantona. The Frenchman's seventh goal in eight matches enabled Alex Ferguson's side to steal a march on Newcastle United yesterday, but only in the figurative sense.

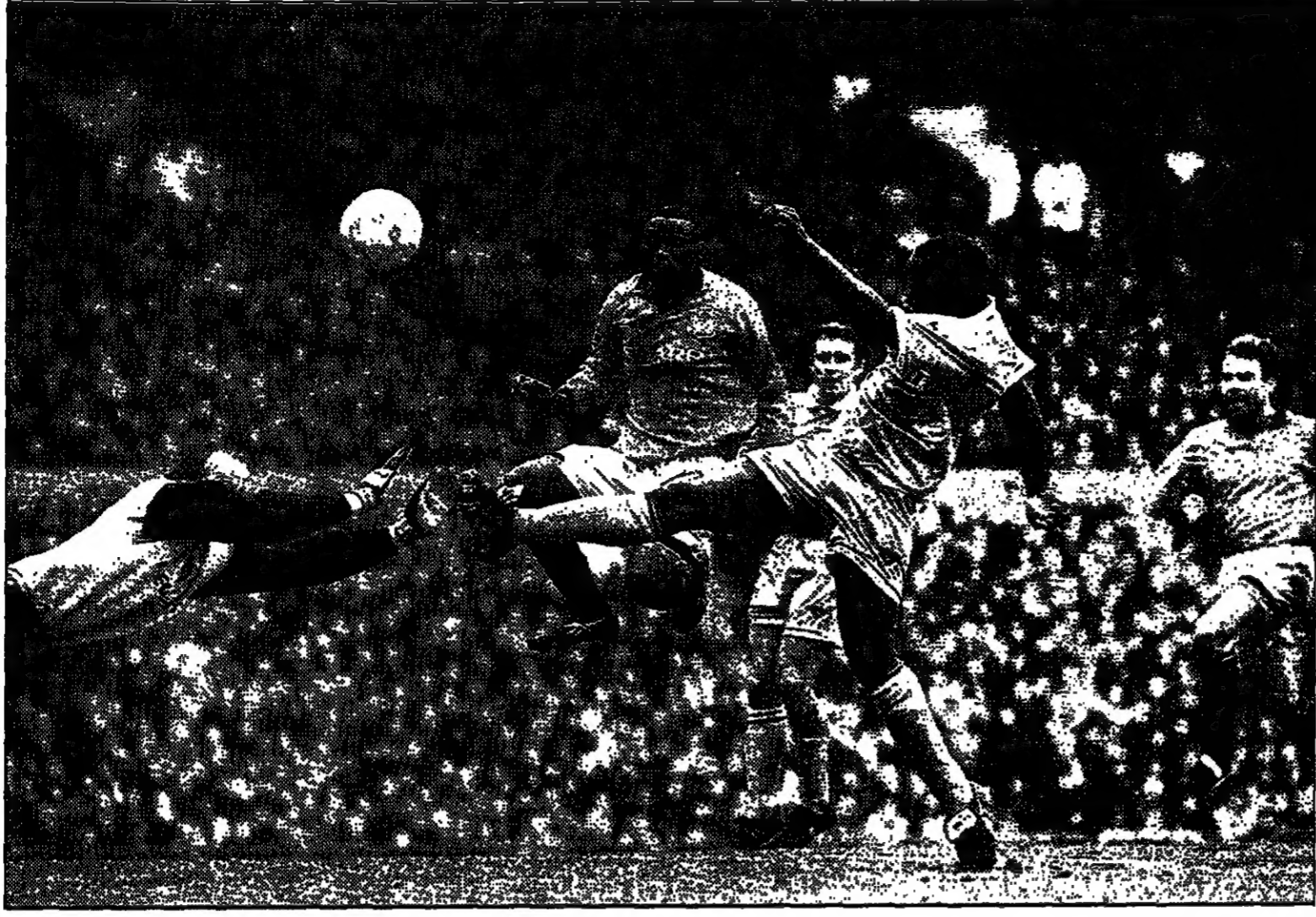
For far from marching to victory Manchester United were often too inclined to stroll around in the manner of men assuming that the points were theirs for the taking. So they should have been had a higher proportion of the goals on offer been taken before half-time, when Coventry's defence was down to the last sandbag.

As it was, Old Trafford, having been sickened by the sight of blood being mopped from the pitch after an awful injury to the Coventry centre-back David Bussat at the start of the game, spent much of the afternoon sweating in a mixture of exasperation and anxiety as United seemed incapable of reflecting their superiority in terms of goals.

The drive of Keane, suspended for this game, was badly missed in midfield. Butt, due to begin a two-match suspension after this weekend, was again influential and Giggs's mastery of the left wing was absolute. But yet again far too many of Manchester United's most promising attackers broke down either on Cole's indifferent first touch or his lack of a quicker response to what was developing around him.

For a short while, understandably, the way the match began cast a pall over the afternoon. After barely a minute and a half's play Bussat suffered a compound fracture of the right leg colliding with Dennis Irwin.

Whelan met Pickering's



Feet first... Cole battles for the ball with Ogrizovic and Williams as McClair runs in from midfield

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

corner from the right with a glancing header that Schmeichel, arching backwards, managed to palm towards the far post. Bussat lunged for the ball, Irwin went for it as well and the Coventry man's limb took the full force of the ensuing collision. Play was delayed for nine minutes while

the defender received emergency treatment before going to hospital.

The loss of Bussat meant that Coventry had immediately to reorganise a defence that has been porous for much of the season. Williams switched from midfield to centre-back and within 10

minutes had made a crucial interception, heading clear a menacing centre from Beckham after a build-up involving Giggs, Cole and Irwin that had Old Trafford salivating.

By half-time, however, United's followers were beginning to bite their lips rather than lick them. United virtu-

ally colonised the Coventry half of the field. Their initial passing was as perceptive as ever and an air of studied calm settled on the proceedings whenever Cantona, lying deeper than usual, gained possession.

But a host of chances came and went, with Cole's scoring touch deserting him once more. Credit still went to the courage and determination of Coventry's defenders, with Danish blocking a shot from Cantona and later clearing Giggs's centre from the goalmouth, but obvious opportunities were missed.

There were moments when Cole achieved the near-impossible by not scoring. Butt nicely took the pass off a low Danish blocking for him but Cole failed to make contact; a gift of a ball from Cantona was struck wide; and in the closing minutes of the first half Cole completely missed his shot after Butt had met a deflected shot from Cantona with a superb first-time ball back into the middle.

A brief response from Coventry midway through the first half — Teifer and Richardson releasing Salako for a shot wide of the far post — must have raised a doubt in United's minds as to the consequences of such wastefulness. If so, it did not last long. Within two minutes of the second half they were ahead.

Initially the scenario was familiar enough. Giggs outwitted Pickering on the left for the umpteenth time and, as the ball bobbed awkwardly into the goalmouth, Cole flailed a foot at it without making contact.

But his emulation of the car-cen denied Richardson a proper headed clearance and the ball bounced down to leave Cantona with the simplest of scoring chances. Even then the promised flood of goals never happened.

Manchester United: Schmeichel, Irwin, G. Neville, May, Sharpe, Beckham, McClair, Butt, Giggs, Cole, Cantona.
Coventry City: Ogrizovic, Pickering, Bussat, Boland, Smith, Dash, Williams, Teifer, Lewis, 79, Richardson, Salako, Whelan, Doble, Nelson, Matthews, O'Callaghan (Bentley).

Drivers fail to see Fangio in the mirror



Richard Williams

YOU always believe you will become the best," Juan Manuel Fangio once said, "but you must never believe you have done so." His achievements made him a legend but his modesty made him loved.

Sunday's Grand Prix of Argentina was the first to take place since the peaceful death last summer of the 84-year-old, whose five world championships between 1951 and 1957 entitled him to be described as the greatest racing driver of all time.

Fangio died in his home town of Balcarce, which is about five hours' drive south of Buenos Aires. His most celebrated triumphs were achieved in Europe but it was to Balcarce that he returned when, a couple of weeks after his 47th birthday, he decided that he was no longer capable of doing justice to his own talent. Now Balcarce has a Fangio museum, installed within an elegant turn-of-the-century building and mostly dedicated to the cars he raced and the trophies he won.

Some of them were on view in Buenos Aires last week, at the track on which he won the grand prix four years running. Behind the main grandstand his compatriots lined up to view the Model A Ford in which he made his debut in 1936, using a pseudonym to hide his identity from disapproving parents.

Next to the Ford stood an even more mythical machine: a big pale green 1940 Chevrolet coupé, of a type familiar from the thrillers of Hawks, Ray and Bourne. This was the car, paid for by the people of Balcarce, in which Fangio won the Gran Premio del Norte and the Mil Milas Argentinas, fearsome events lasting several days in which competitors were required to navigate open roads that were often no more than rough tracks. I thought of that as I listened to Hill and Schumacher complaining about the difficulties they faced when confronted by a little bit of dust and a couple of bumps a mere inch or two high.

But each generation sets its own kind of test. Some time in the next century people will probably examine the machines of Hill and Schumacher with the same sense of wonder that overwhelmed me as I looked at Fangio's Chevy.

The sensation was even stronger a couple of days before the grand prix, as I was walking through a shopping centre in Buenos Aires and came across another exhibit sent along by the Balcarce museum: a Maserati 250F purporting to be the one in which Fangio won the German Grand Prix of 1957, when he came from a long way behind to beat the Ferraris of Hawthorn and Collins with a drive of divine virtuosity.

The 250F was probably the most beautiful racing car ever built. Only a couple of dozen were made and their rarity value is immense. Many fakes have been created, while genuine cars have been reconstructed to resemble more famous ones.

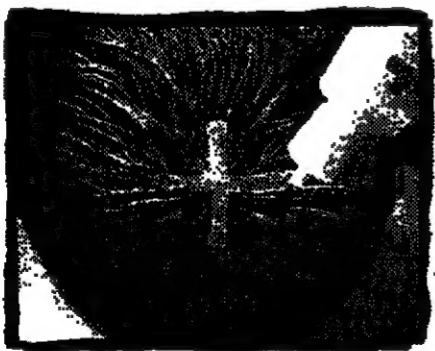
So I can't say for sure if this was the real thing. It certainly looked perfect, with its long nose and elegant tail, the object of semi-curious stares from people moving between the clothes shops and the fast food court.

ON Sunday, an hour before the race, they unveiled a plaque to Fangio at the circuit.

Another of his cars, the Mercedes W196 of 1954-55, was pushed silently down the main straight and past the grandstand by four mechanics in spotless white overalls. It seemed a pity that they didn't fire up the straight-eight engine and perhaps ask Jose Froilan Gonzalez, Fangio's contemporary and fellow countryman, to drive a lap in it. But somebody said that the immaculate silver car would never be started again, because they wanted Fangio to have been the last man to drive it. And anyway Gonzalez was stuck in traffic outside the circuit.

Alain Prost attended the unveiling but none of the current drivers was there. They're an sentimental bunch, understandably enough, and tend to leave that sort of thing to the rest of us, but I thought they could have made an exception for the only man to win their championship five times.

Still, I was glad that if one engine had to be running as Fangio's old car was wheeled past, it should come from the McLaren pit, where the present-day Mercedes engineers were fine-tuning Coulthard's car, oblivious to the little ceremony. Perhaps the man we were honouring would have preferred that. Life going on, work being done, a race to run.



To many this concept would sound melodramatic. Not to us. Only dandruff sufferers know what a heavy cross this condition is to bear. An itchy, flaky scalp will not only cause physical distress, it can undermine your confidence, too. Our research taught us that dandruff is caused by a microbe. A medical condition demanding a reliable medical solution — First Aid.

First Aid for your dandruff.

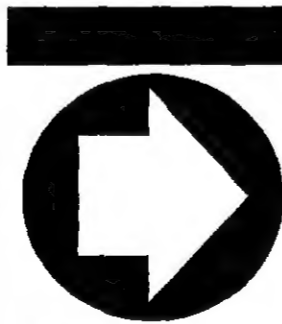
Our solution, the Nizoral Dandruff Shampoo formula, proved so successful that it's been tried and trusted by doctors and dermatologists for years. Our shampoo cares for your hair differently. The breakthrough came when we identified and patented an ingredient that would specifically target and prevent the microbe that is the root cause of dandruff.



NIZORAL DANDRUFF SHAMPOO. FIRST AID FOR DANDRUFF.

Nizoral Dandruff Shampoo works differently. As the microbe is prevented from returning, so too, are the itching and flaking symptoms. Unlike some harsher anti-dandruff treatments, our Nizoral Dandruff Shampoo is specially nice to use as well, being gentle and perfume free. So all you'll be aware of is how clean and healthy your hair feels.

Nizoral Dandruff Shampoo is effective, and after an initial period of using it twice weekly, you should only need to use it once a week to keep dandruff away. In between, you can wash your hair with whatever shampoo you like. You can buy a bottle from your pharmacist without prescription. To obtain your free information leaflet, call 0990 134 218.



Jeremy Paxman sat in the middle and 15 men sat on either side of him, dressed in rugby strip but all wearing clip-on microphones. Paxman was wearing shorts under his suit. Armando Iannucci

Guardian Crossword No 20,622

Set by Pasquale

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
10 11
12 13
14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25
26 27
28 29

- Across**
1 Iron tip given a spot of paint (7)
5 Trainee in hospital department following the boss (7)
10 Grieve for 27 (4)
11 Those that keep quiet — those lacking initial success in tennis? (10)
12 Several pits in a pub, relatively (5)
13 Flowering plant makes farewell almost cheerful (8)
14 Ain't noses put out of joint by remarkable person? (9)
16 Female star may be joined by any number in bed (9)
17 Amusement offered by second drink (5)
19 Girl into history is expert on the Greeks (9)
23 To applaud deception is nonsense (8)
24 Electric current needs flex — agree? (5)
- Down**
2 Learned, but without Latin — do again (7)
3 Vessel's removable inner casing (5)
4 Fool without work, I should be an aviator (2-5)
6 Singer is targeted by indoor players (6)
7 Give girl story as a distraction (9)
8 Bites offered by vehicle in pouring rain (7)

RELEAVALS
A E A A P E
D I A R I E T I O O E
I R I R I A A A
T I R I T I A A I O
I A I I I I A A I
I A E T A A I I
O O O O C O C O
B A R D I W O R D S
A A A I I I A A
P E B B T A I N T A C C E
O A T I I I O G T
O A I I I I I I O I
I I E I E I I I I
C R A S S E A D D R E S S E T

- CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,622**
9 Neglect correspondence and abandon duty (5,4,4)
15 Torture which has e.g. limbs strung up with difficulty (9)
18 'Handy' couple of friends (7)
20 Adult is devoured by ferocious beast — what an affair! (7)
21 Tree ceremony (7)
22 Ticker-tapper trodden on by black shoe (6)
25 Winner to fret impatiently (5)

Solution tomorrow
27 Shuck? Then call our solutions line on 0800 288 288. Calls cost 39p per min, cheap rate, 49p per min at other times. Service supplied by AT&T

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